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A

REVIEW

OF

Mr. *NEVIN's* *TRYAL*
before the Synod, 1724,

OCCASIONED

By Mr. *McBride's* few Thoughts in
Defence of the Synod, contained in his
Pamphlet, Entituled, *Overtures trans-*
mitted &c. Set in a fair Light.

By the Author of the *TRYAL.*



BELFAST:

Printed by JAMES BLOW, and sold
at his Shop, M. DCC. XXVIII.



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WHEN an Appeal has been made to the Reason and Candor of Men and Christians, from the *Decrees* of such as either really are, or fancy themselves to be, vested with *Power and Authority*, it is a plain Debt to the publick, to shew the Case has been truly stated, and to warn the World of any unfair Arts and Measures which may be afterwards used to lead Men into a partial and mistaken Judgment. It has been thought that the practising this way, by the *Author* I am concern'd with, has been so gross, and at the same time so weak and trifling, that it might look too like a distrusting the *common Sense* of Mankind, to bestow any Pains on drawing up a formal Answer to him. And it is very certain, if it cou'd be hoped that Men wou'd think it worth their while, again to peruse such a bulky Performance as the **TRYAL** happen'd to be, and carefully compare the direct Answers which may be there met with, to all the mighty Charges and Reasonings that are offered against me in Defence of the Synod, it wou'd be no other than a superfluous Undertaking, to form any new distinct Reply. But as this is not to be expected from any but the few curious and impartial Inquirers after Truth, it becomes necessary to

make the Work shorter and easier for the generality, who may be in the least dispos'd to give this Cause a Rehearing ; and for their Encouragement to put into their Hands a plain Brief of it, by examining the Weakness and Defects of this strange Representation, that is with such an Air of Assurance sought to be obtruded on the World.

THIS is a Task attended with it's own Difficulties. For Authors who are *true Adepts* in the **TRITICAL** way of writing, have all the Advantage of a Party pursu'd thro' wild and desert Mountains, who are hardly ever to be reduced to the Necessity of a fair Engagement, but fly from hill to hill, and only maintain a kind of running Fight ; and tho' every now and then they make a Show, as if they were fully resolved to give Battle, and dispute every Inch of Ground, yet after all their Strength and their Safety lies in skipping from place to place, and their greatest Hope is by rambling up and down, to tire out the regular Forces, by their being obliged to march in good Order, and keep close to the established Rules of the Art of War. For in like manner these *desultory Writers* are never to be fixed to any Point, and deal so much in *incoherent Starts and Hints*, that they are scarce to be come at by any of the Methods of fair and sober Reasoning. Their *Thoughts* are tumbled together with as little Order and Regularity, as the hills and risings seem to be in vast heaps and ridges of Mountains, and they equally serve them as Fastnesses to fly to, out of the reach of the most convincing Arguments, and so have a fair chance to tire out any who may attempt to overcome them by a close and rational way of writing. Thus we see the learned and excellent Person who has with so much Calmness and Strength

of Reason, pursued this Author in Vindication of his private Letter, has been put under greater Hardships in wandering after him thro' his unconnected *Thoughts*, than in defeating him, where he you'd fairly meet him; and at last modestly desires his 'Reader to peruse the Reasons in Mr. N---s Tryal, and fairly compare their Solidity and Strength with the rambling and weak Arguments Mr. M----- has offered'. See Mr. Boyse's Vindication, &c. p. 56.

It is happy for me that when this *Drawcanfir* has at last taken the Field, he has, with respect to any case, shut up himself in narrow Bounds, and those for the most part such as I have travelled thro' many a time before. For as bold and daring as he is, he pretends to no more than to venture offer a few *Thoughts in Defence of the Synod*.

Now it were to no purpose to put such a Writer in mind, that what in this View he must only aim at, is, to offer such *Thoughts* many or few, as will evidently tend to vindicate the Synod in casting me out for refusing to purge myself of a suspected Error, when they knew it was contrary to the Light of my Conscience to submit to a Method so repugnant to the essential Rules of Justice, and the established Discipline of the Gospel. For he and all his Brethren of the critical way, scorn to keep close to a Point; they must have the pleasure of wandering and amusing themselves with whatever they meet. And thus in order to assert to the poor independent Synod their inquisitory Power, he takes Rise from the Tears, the Synod's trouble and mine new from his Eyes, leads us thro' the long Story of the Conversation at *Monyre*, and trumps up the Articles of the Libel, which the Party themselves thought fit either to refer, drop, or not enter upon.

But what these had to do in Defence of the Synod Conduct in excluding me upon a Claim of Power which had no manner of Relation to them, and might just have been as well done, as we see has since happen'd in the Exclusion of the *Presbytery of Antrim*, if there had never been any such thing at all, wou'd be very hard to conceive, if we were to expect any just or coherent Reasoning. But I shall not insist on such rigid Terms, but follow him wherever his Run of Fancy leads me, in the way or out of the way, thro' thick or thin, it is all the same to me.

* HE seems to make his first stand in a very lucky place; for there he can find no manner of Safety, if the Truth of the case, or the Party's own Decisions be able to dislodge him. He acknowledges what *drew Tears from his Eyes*, was the truth

* AND now because Mr *Nevin's* Case is brought in here, no plausible Excuse can be offer'd by Mr *H.* in favour of the Synod, but the Reasons of the Protestors against his Exclusion are (he says) in the Opinion of very good Judges, Unanswerable: I shall venture to offer a few Thoughts in Defence of the SYNOD, and as for the Unanswerable Reasons he speaks of, I shall leave it to the unbiass'd Reader to judge, if they are not fairly answer'd, either in the Lettter annexed to the *Essay*, or obviated in the Reasonings that have been already offer'd. Mr. *Nevin* is a Gentleman I esteem very much, and can assure the World, the Trouble he gave the SYNOD, brought upon himself, drew Tears from my Eyes; though I could not observe him much affected, which was the sensible Remark of many besides myself. It's plain, he had taken very unguardedly of the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity in a Conversation he had in Mr. *Hannington's* of *Manchester*, which he himself has published by his own Narrative; the Conversation was introduced when the third Section of the new third Chapter of the *Westminster-Confession* had been mentioned where the *Magistrat's* Power to suppress *Blasphemy*, is asserted. See Overtures set in a fair Light, p. 58, 59.

gave the Synod, and brought upon myself: But he
 you'd have remember'd of all the Articles of the
 worthy Libel, which came before the Synod, not
 one came properly and regularly even in their own
 Opinion; for they either refer'd, dropt, or shrunk
 from the plain and obvious meaning of them. So
 that the naked Truth is, the Synod, *i. e.* himself
 and some leading Men, libell'd and prosecuted me
 in an unprecedented and irregular way, and without
 any Color of Justice gave me the Trouble of standing
 several days in Judgment before them. And if they
 brought upon themselves the vexatious Trouble of
 being baffled in the violent Attempt they made upon
 my Character and Ministry, I know no Reason
 why I shou'd have been much affected. But had I
 observed this Gentleman's Tears, I shou'd have
 been ready to apply to him and his tender hearted
 Brethren these Words, *weep not for me, but weep*
for yourselves.

NOR is he more fortunate in what he wou'd
 make for being plain, and perhaps design'd for his
 head Quarters in this Excursion he makes to re-
 vive the sinking Honour of the Synod, *viz.* That
 he had talked very unguardedly of the Doctrine of the
 ever blessed Trinity &c. I freely own this and so
 many other things in his few Thoughts being so pure-
 ly imaginary, and entirely the Creatures of his
 own Brain, gave me a strong Apprehension, that
 there must be some unhappy Cause for his seeing
 Things in such a strange and mistaken Manner.
 And upon the least Reflection this will appear to
 be nothing else than his own intemperate Zeal,
 which in a natural Way may easily produce this
 surprizing Effect. For however the Fervour and
 Warmth of Zeal is as necessary to preserve in our
 minds a devout and religious Temper, as Heat
 is

is to keep the proper Degree of Vigour and Activity in our bodily Frame, yet whenever it rises to an immoderate Height, it casts the Man's Spirit into a raging Fever, just as an unnatural Degree of Heat or Rarefcence of the Blood causes that Disorder in the Body, and they have much the same Effects. For in one Case as well as the other, in the Fever of the Mind as well as the Body, the Imagination gains such enormous Strength, as does not only beget the Belief of strange internal Apprehensions, but it is able to assure Men of the Presence of external Objects which are not. For if this were not really his case how cou'd it ever enter into his Head, *that I had talked very unguardedly of the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, in a Conversation &c. which I had published by my own Narrative*, when there is not one Word in the whole Narrative about that Doctrine at all; and yet with him 'tis PLAIN *I had publish'd that I had talked very unguardedly about*. But if with him the DEITY of Christ, is the same with the *Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity* yet it is all visionary of my having *talked very unguardedly of that important Doctrine, for what I said of it's being no Blasphemy in the Jews to deny Christ to be God*, was in the Sense I delivered and represented it in my Narrative of that Conversation, so far from talking *unguardedly* of it, that when I call'd it in my Answer to the Libel a certain and undoubted Truth p. 64, the Synod were so wise in their Anger as to drop it, and declare it was not proper for them to determine that Matter. And much less is there any Ground for the Charge from my making this Reply to the Gentleman of the House, that seem'd to be fittest to his Depth and Understanding, *that it was not Blasphemy*

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phemy to call Christ a Creature, when we all own him to be God and Man, p. 5. for I undertake to show that calling Christ a Creature as well as the Creator, is Language not unknown to very cautious and Orthodox Divines.

BUT pray what if this had been the Truth of the Case? Must every one that happens to talk *unguardedly* of that mysterious point be brought under Censure? What then would have become of one of the top Men of the Committee, who blunder'd about it at so odd a rate in the Face of the Synod, as I have taken Notice p. 25? How came the Synod to act so partially, that when they were prosecuting one for *talking unguardedly* of that Doctrine, they cou'd patiently hear another utter the grossest Nonsense about it? Was it that they did not understand it to be so, or wink'd at the Fault of a Friend? What will the World think of all this Outcry of *talking unguardedly* of the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, when this Writer himself will be anon found saying the most *unguarded* things of the Deity of Christ? But if this won't stop his Mouth, whenever he points out wherein this Unguardedness consists, I undertake to give him more famous Instances of *talking unguardedly* upon that Head both in Pulpits and Presbyteries, which yet were pass'd o'er in Silence; and sure either of these must be full as inexcusable, as any thing that dropt in an *off-hand free Conversation*.

* AFTER he had thus prepar'd and alarm'd his
B his

• HERE observe that his Conversation, and the Print he scatter'd at the SYNOD gave Offence.

First, Because a Minister should in Conversation, and at all Times, treat that important Doctrine with Gravity, for it animates

his Reader, he proceeds to muster up some Particulars of the *Offence*, which he says, my *Conversation* and the *Print I scattered at the Synod* gave. I shall only warn the Reader, that there must be great Allowance made for the Manner and Turns of Expression, that are peculiar to Authors, to enter into their distinct and particular Sentiments. And in no Case can there be greater Occasion for it, than the one now before us. I shall only once for all, illustrate this by the peculiar Stain he uses in these few *Emphatical* Words. When he mentions my *Conversation* in general, and as something distinct from the *Print I scattered*, one, who had not a true Taste of his *curt peculiar* Stile, might fancy he intended the general Course and Tenour of my Life; whereas the good Man, as the *Sequel* shows, designs nothing more, than the Discourse or Conversation which happen'd at *Monymusk* and makes up a great part of what he calls my *Print*, tho' he mentions them as distinct Grounds of Offence. For the *Print I scatter'd* is not to be understood of any indecent Picture I had diverted my self or Friends with, or any seditious News Paper, I had handed about during the sitting of the Synod; which are the only Senses in which that Word has been hitherto used by less profound and knowing Persons, but by it he means my printed

Letter

animates the whole *Christian Scheme*, agreeable to the Apostolic Injunction, *Tir. ii, 7, 8. And in all things, shewing thyself a Pattern of good Works, in Doctrine shewing Uncorruptness, Gravity, Simplicity, sound Speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary Part may be ashamed, having no evil Thing to say of you.* I shall appeal to the unbiass'd Part of Mankind, who shall read Mr. Nevin's own Narrative, in his Letter to Mr. Smith, whether he appears to have observed this *Apostolick Rule*. *Overtures for a fair Light*, p. 59.

Letter, to the great saving of Paper, and his own and the Printer's Labour and Pains. This single Caution must serve to engage the Readers Attention, and put him on his strictest Guard, not to understand this Author always, as he is wont to do the common Writers of the Age. For he undertook to draw up his Thoughts on these Matters by something like Authority, and consequently must have the Privilege of expressing himself in what Manner he pleased. And may he enjoy it for me; for I am no further concerned with his odd and rambling way of Writing, than to fix a certain Meaning to his Words; and it were but a wretched Drudgery to undertake a Critic's Part upon a Performance, where every Paragraph, nay almost every Sentence has something *disjointed* or *impertinent*. And as a Piece finished by a masterly Hand is above the reach of *Criticism*, so what is done by a meer B--r in the Art of composing, is beneath the Critic's Care, unless he would make himself just as ridiculous. I must leave it therefore to the men of any true Taste, to divert themselves by observing how strangely his *few Thoughts* are tack'd together and dress'd out in a most *fantastic Form*, while I only set my self to attend to the Matter and Substance of them: But have at the same time inserted his *few Thoughts* entire, that there may be no Room to complain that I have used any foul Play, to support this ludicrous way of treating him.

And that the rather, because it is the first Charge brought against me that I have not observed the Apostolic rule with respect to Gravity, *Tit.* 2. 7, 8. There is much the same Ground of Offence offered in the last Article of the Libel against me, for the Committee observe, that *I did not treat*

the important Subject of Conversation with that Gravity and Seriousness that becomes a Gospel Minister ; to which I made this Reply, p. 72. ' But I challenge Malice itself to point out one single Expression relating to any Part of the Conversation, that wants that Gravity & Seriousness which becomes a Gospel Minister. I have indeed in the midst of treating that important Subject of Conversation, broke a Jest or two on the Master of the House, which he is well enough train'd up to, by some who know what is a becoming Air, and what is consistent with good Manners as well as any of the Reverend Committee can modestly set up for. But is not this unbecoming a Gospel Minister, to mingle Jest or Satyr with grave and serious Subjects? But I think this huge Offence must dwindle and sneak out of Sight, when I put the Reverend Committee in Mind, how a famous Prophet of God treated the Priests of Baal upon a solemn Tryal, whether their gods or his shou'd be God, Kings, 18. 24, 27. And call ye on the Name of your gods, and I will call on the Name of the Lord, and the God that answereth by Fire, Let him be God, and all the People answered and said, It is well spoken. And it came to pass at Noon, that Elijah mocked 'em, and said, Cry aloud : For he is a god, either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a Journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be waked.

It might be reasonably presumed that this is such a substantial Warrant to vindicate that little Freedom of Humour and Raillery, I used on that Occasion, that before any would renew so grave a Charge against me, it wou'd be shown I had no manner of Pretence, to plead such an unexceptionable Precedent, and that it did not come up to my

my Case at all. And might it not be justly expected that after such a solemn Challenge, the *ludicrous and vain Expressions* I used shou'd be pointed out? But either or both of these wou'd be too severe a Task; and the very attempting it wou'd be like opening up a bad Cause, the sure and speedy Way to ruine it.

AMONG all the Stratagems to be met with in the War of Letters, none have been thought more extraordinary and artful, than that of answering a large Book by way of Specimen. But this *able Divine* has out-done this notable Device itself, for he has set us an Example of *venturing to offer a few Thoughts in Defence of the Synod, of giving a short Account of that Affair, which was apprehended to have impaired their Reputation, that they wou'd never be able to answer for themselves, and of submitting his short Vindication of them to the Judgement of the impartial,* without ever taking Notice of one Word, that had been said to criminate that Reverend and venerable Assembly. He does not give himself or the impartial the Trouble of so much as a single Specimen of this kind; and so has taught the Masters of *Spiritual Defiance* a sure way never to be overcome, which is, still to keep at Arms Length, and never come to a close Engagement, or if any be so resolute or daring, as to force in upon them, and man them severely, never to take notice of it, but dissemble the Affront and Injury, repeat the old Challenges, and talk on with the Air of certain *Victory and Triumph.*

BUT I shou'd remember that writing in this merry Strain may be thought a sufficient Evidence that I am justly charg'd with the Want of Gravity. And because this *solemn* Author has seen fit to specify the important doctrine, that a Minister shou'd

always treat with Gravity, and to appeal to the *unbias'd Part of Mankind*, whether I appear to have observed the *Apostolic Rule* he cites, I am willing to accept his fresh Challenge, and have a fair Tryal of Skill with him upon this very Point; and therefore don't stop to pronounce in the first place that some things are so *ridiculous* in themselves that they are not to be treated with *Gravity and Seriousness*. And such is a raving *Drunkard's* mighty Zeal for Religion, and a *spiritual Prize-fighter's* loud and empty Bravadoes, when every Turn he discovers he knows not how to handle his Weapon with the least Dexterity, but lays himself open to a Thousand severe and deadly Thrusts.

AND 2dly that it is no way unbecoming a Gospel Minister, nor disagreeable to the Apostle's Injunction to represent Things in their *natural Light*, and indulge the Faculty and Humour of *Pleasantly and smiling* on proper Occasions. Some may fancy a Man is not grave or serious enough, till he is moap'd into a Statue, and appears always with a *demure Look and solemn Face*. But the Genius of our holy Religion, is too opposite to all the Symptoms and Appearances of *Superstition* to encourage a *sowre and melancholly Temper*, and to cramp any of the Essential Liberties and Faculties of human Nature, among which *Chearfulness, innocent Festivity and Mirth*, have been always reckon'd. And whatever the great Admirers of *starch'd and formal Gravity* may have thought of it's Necessity and great Usefulness in the immediate Exercise of their Devotion, I never heard before they were such Enemies to that facetious Humour, and those inoffensive Railleries of Fancy, that might be as Sauce to our Conversation, and give it a quicker and more agreeable Relish. But some Fault must be

found with me, and to make a Jest of a *noted Fool and Madman* must be a Crime of the first Magnitude. But I beg leave to observe to these Men of Gravity, that surely the wise Man's double and opposite Direction in this case, will either one way or other bear me out in this Part of my Conduct, *Prov. 26. 4, 5.* and to be serious with one of no Understanding, is a sure way to make a Jest of one's self indeed.

BUT 3dly, I must frankly own, that Experience has discovered to me not only the Innocence, but downright Necessity of maintaining a *Chearfulness and Gaiety of Spirit*, when a Man has to do with a certain kind of Authors. They write with a decisive and assuming Air, they prove every thing by their bare Word, and drive on in their own dull heavy way, without any fixed or certain Scope; so that whoever will answer them, must wander from Point to Point, just as they do, and scarce ever know what they wou'd be at. Now this *see* Method of writing, is like yawning in Company, is catching and infectious and there is no way so safe to preserve a Man's Mind from feeling this reading Torpor and Dulness, as to cherish a *Vivacity of Thought*, and indulge the innocent Sallies of Fancy and Humour. And therefore that I may not be found nodding with this Author, nor put the Reader in danger of being as *heedless* in perusing, as he has evidently been in composing, I have been obliged in my own Defence to make merry with them from my first setting out. And with every ingenious Mind this will effectually save me from the heavy Imputation of wanting Gravity. Especially when I add
In the last place, that it is an idle Dream and Folly of the Man's own Brain, that I have treated
that

that important Doctrine that animates the whole Christian Scheme, without Gravity. For if he is able to distinguish between the Doctrine itself, and a Man meddling with it, that had no manner of Notion of the plainest things about it, he will then clearly perceive, that the Subject may be treated with a becoming Gravity, and yet the Man's stupid and palpable Ignorance exposed to just Contempt and Scorn. And that this is the whole of the matter, about which all this Bustle is made, every one may discover, with half an Eye, if they don't with a certain Sett of Men take Moapishness for Gravity, which will make the plainest most orthodox Truth appear as frightful Heresies, or at least as turning them into Ridicule; just as red colored Glasse before the Eyes causes the most lovely and attractive Objects to look bloody and terrible.

* But in his next Charge he grows bolder, and attacks me in a more dangerous Part; for his second Particular is, *the Proposition asserted by Mr N----*

* 2dly, THE Proposition asserted by Mr. Nevin, as he himself has Narrated it, is false, viz. THAT IT IS NO BLASPHEMY IN A FEW, TO DENY CHRIST TO BE GOD, otherwise the Scriptures have express'd that Sin in the JEWS very unwarrantable as is evident by the following plain Texts of Scripture, xiii, 45. But when the Jews saw the Multitude, they were filled with Envy, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming, Acts xviii, 5, 6. And when Silas and Timotheus was come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ, and when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook his Raiment, and said, I could add other Texts as plain as these, which prove, that it is BLASPHEMY in a FEW to deny CHRIST to be GOD. Yea, to me it appears aggravated Blasphemy in them, seeing them the Oracles of God, and Predictions of the Messiah, were in such a special manner committed. Overtures set in a fair Light, p. 59.

he himself has *NARRATED* it, is false, and
 proves it after this wise manner, in this very ele-
 gant Strain, *otherwise the Scriptures have express'd that*
Sin in the Jews very unwarily, which he says is evi-
 dent by the following plain Texts of Scripture, Acts xiii.
 45. xviii. 5. 6. But never was there more egregious
 trifling with the Publick, than thus to trump up
 such a poor mangled *Accusation*, which had been
 answer'd and defeated in the most plain and con-
 vincing manner, thro' a great part of the *Tryal* !
 Can this be accounted for any other way, than his
 trusting to the different Fates of Men, mark'd out
 for *Hereticks*, and of the *Favorites* of a prevailing
 Party in the Church ? These are priviledg'd Per-
 sons, acquire the Benefit of Impunity, by the great
 Services they are supposed to have done to the
 Cause, and without ever examining, all they say
 is thought as true as Gospel. But those are look'd
 the worse upon, for offering to defend themselves,
 are judg'd worthy of a new *Accusation*, because
 they did not sink under the first; and all they can
 say for themselves, in Opposition to such holy and
 orthodox Men goes for nought, and is utterly de-
 spis'd and neglected. For otherwise wou'd he have
 renew'd such a groundless *Charge*, which almost
 every Page of the *Tryal* did obviate and confute ?
 But if it was any way unbecoming his Sancti-
 mony and *Gravity* to shew he had made himself
 master of such an *unhallow'd* Performance, as the
Tryal that bore so hard upon the Synod, it cou'd
 have been no Diminution to his blazing Character,
 to have look'd into the Exculpation which the Sy-
 nod in their great Wisdom and Goodness saw
 fit to insert into their own Minute, on the third
 Article of the Libel. p. 117. ' He (Mr. N-----)
 declared his Sense of the above Proposition, in the
 C following

following Words, *as I had not in the Conversation*
 (at Mr. Hannington's) *maintained that Proposition*
as some may understand it, that denying Christ
be GOD, was no Sin or Error, or not reviling our
blessed Saviour, so I had (both there and in the Letter)
expressly declared against that Sense of it, and
limited it so, that all may see, I only meant it of Blas-
phemy, as it is a Crime punishable by the civil Magis-
trate; but in any other Sense, I did, and (still)
condemn it as much as any Member of the Synod.

HERE he might have met with that *Distinction*
of Blasphemy, which as it was the great Foundation
of my Defence, so it would at once have let him
see to how little purpose these Texts were again upon
the mere Force of their Sound urged as enough to prove
my Proposition false. Was it not fairly own'd that
this Charge was brought against me, p. 105. 'that
the Proposition even confin'd to the JEWS, was
directly opposite and contradictory to the sacred
Scriptures; for therein the JEWS were expressly
charg'd with Blasphemy, for opposing the Doctrine
of Christ. And the following Texts were cited
and applied to this purpose, with a strange Abuse
of Triumph. Acts 13. 4, 5. 18. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 1
James 2. 7. But these were easily shown to be
from contradicting what I had advanc'd upon the
Nature of Blasphemy. For I had own'd there was
a general Sense of the Word, in which the JEWS
were justly chargeable with it. And that it was
only that Sort and Degree of Blasphemy, which
punishable by the Magistrate, that I had denied
to be guilty of in saying Christ is not God. And
that it was plain the Texts were only to be under-
stood in the first, and not in the latter Sense
at all. And therefore unless they cou'd produce
Texts wherein they were declared to be obnoxious

to Punishment from the secular Powers, when they denied Christ to be God, or continued to be JEWS, which is one and the same thing : Let 'em multiply never so many, wherein they were represented as *blaspheming*, for opposing Christ and his Doctrine, they did not in the least contradict me.

Now if he expected the Persons, for whose sake he ventures to offer his few Thoughts in Defence of the Synod, wou'd have been at the pains to look into my Tryal in the most hasty and cursory manner, wou'd he not have thought himself obliged to furnish them with some Answer to what might otherwise stagger their Belief in the Synod's unerring Judgment, and cool their Resentment against me, as a branded Heretick ? Was it not incumbent on him, as an *able Defender* of the much abused Synod, to have taken notice of this *substantial Distinction*, which if left in it's full Force, must reduce the whole Charge against me, to that single Point, which all the Party themselves, this Author and one or two more only excepted, were fain to drop, after a great deal of wrangling and threatning about it ? Wou'd not a Man's Candor call upon him to acknowledge such a Defence was offered ? And wou'd not a fair Reasoner obviate a *Distinction*, which if just and well founded, must demolish all he so much boasted of and gloried in ? I am at a Loss indeed how to express myself, upon his setting forth my *Proposition false, as narrated by myself*, without the least Hint or Notice, that it was only of that Sort or Degree of *Blasphemy*, that justly comes within the Sphere of human Laws, that I uttered and maintained that *Proposition* ; for however free and merry I may be with the Man's Intellectuals, and his awkward way of writing, I am not willing directly to charge

him as disingenuous. But I shall leave his Admirers to call by what Name they please, his taking a *Proposition* of mine in quite another Sense than I had declared in his hearing, times without Number and in the *Trial* assured the World, it was understood and intended by me, and his pretending at the same time to set it forth *as narrated by myself*. Had he not learn'd from the Instance of the *Affidavit*, how base a thing it is to take a Scrap of Conversation, and publish it to the World, without any Regard to what went before, or follow'd after? Were there not clear Examples given, p. 115. *that at this rate, Heresy and Blasphemy may be made to flow from the Fountain of Truth*, and I must still add, *the DARLING CONFESSION too may be made to flow from the Spring of many an Error*. What then, is it fair dealing in him, to catch at one part of my Letter without any Regard to what is set forth as the Rise and Scope of the Conversation, and then to tell the World, that *my Proposition as narrated by myself is false*, when he drops what is set down to qualify the Sense and Meaning of it; and without which it is not my *Proposition* at all, any more than the Language of the Fool's Heart, *that there is not a God* is the Proposition and Meaning of the Psalmist. Cou'd he be ignorant that the famous *Affidavit* itself did expressly say, that *much had been then said concerning the Magistrate's Power in punishing Offenders against the second Table of the Law*? But above all, cou'd this celebrated Member of the Committee, forget what they had themselves observed in the third Article, *'that I made a Distinction of Blasphemy, into that which is condemned in Scripture and that which comes within the Sphere of humane Laws'*? Or, cou'd it slip out of his Mind, that

their fourth Article was, that the Words even as explain'd (which is much the same as *narrated*) by him, *seem to us to sound harsh in pious Ears*? How will he answer it to his Brethren, that he shou'd venture so much farther, and pronounce my *Proposition* as *narrated by myself false*; when they only observed, that it *seem'd to them to sound harsh in pious Ears*? May not this give some Umbrage, that he was convinced of the Truth and Justness of my Remark on that Expression, p. 152. 'That tho' in their Libel and Minute relating to my Explanation of that Proposition, they have used much the same Words with the Pope, in his famous Bull and Constitution *UNIGENITUS*, against Father Quesnell, yet they did not show the same Consistency with themselves and good Sense, that his Holiness did: For if he pronounced Father Quesnell's Propositions to be sounding ill in, and offensive to pious Ears, he also condemn'd them as false, &c. But with the Committee and this Party, a Proposition may be sounding harsh in pious Ears, when it is neither false, wicked nor erroneous.' When therefore this strenuous Defender of the Synod pronounces that to be false, which they only observed contain'd just *Ground of Offence*, that is, *sounds harsh in pious Ears*, does it not look like owning that the Synod did not carry their Charge high enough against me, but were mistaken in not censuring my *Proposition* as directly false; and were in the Wrong to observe that a *Proposition* might *seem to sound harsh in pious Ears*, that was not certainly false and erroneous? And how bravely then he has defended the Synod in this Particular, let him and his Constituents settle at their Leisure.

BUT

* B U T it may be alledg'd he allows me the full Benefit of this Distinction of *Blasphemy*, and overthrows it directly by what he advances under his 3^d Particular; for there he at least asserts (how-ever as to proving he is as sparing as on the other Parts of the Charge against me) *that I talk-*

* 3^{dly} It appears further by Mr. Nevin's printed Letter to Mr. Smith, that he had talked in this unwary Manner, with a View to confute the Doctrine of the *Westminster Confession*, which asserts the Magistrate's Power to SUPPRESS BLASPHEMY, to which purpose he must wrest the Word SUPPRESS, by giving it a bloody Meaning, as if it could signify no other Resentment, but KNOCKING on the Head; whereas the Word signifies to *bear down, restrain or check*; and all intended by the *Confession* is, that the Civil Magistrate has a Power to *bear down or restrain* Blasphemy in *Jew and Gentile*; and therefore they who look not on the *Confession* with an evil Eye, will see that the Doctrine mentioned is supported, not only by the Text, *Lev. xxiv. 16.* but three other Texts of Scripture are set down before that of *Leviticus*, to prove this Article, viz. *Isaiah xlix. 23. And Kings shall be thy nursing Fathers, and Queens thy nursing Mothers. Psalm 122. 9. Because of the House of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good. Ezra vii. 23. Whatsoever is commanded by the God of Heaven, let it be diligently done, for the House of the God of Heaven, for why should there be Wrath against the Realm of the King and his son: v. 25. And then Ezra after the Wisdom of thy God, that is in thine Hand, set Magistrates and Judges that may judge of the People that are beyond the River, all such as know the Law of thy GOD, and teach ye them that know them not. v. 26. Whosoever shall not do the Law of thy GOD, and the Law of the King, let Judgement be speedily executed upon him, whether it be unto Death or to Banishment, or to Confiscation of Goods, or to Imprisonment.*

FROM these Texts compar'd all that can be inferr'd, is That there are some Kinds of BLASPHEMY punishable by Death, others to be restrained in a milder way, to the Glory of GOD, and publick Good, which to deny must open a Door to all Errors and Immoralities, and puts it out of the Magistrate's Power to be a Terror to evil Doers. *Overtures set in a fair Light p. 60.*

ed in this unwary Manner, with a view to confute the doctrine of the *Westminster Confession*, wresting the Word suppress, to give it a bloody Meaning, as if it cou'd signify no other Resentment than knocking o' the Head, whereas it signifies to bear down, restrain, or check : and after citing the Texts refer'd to in the *Confession*, as he supposes to prove this Branch of the Magistrate's Power, he roundly pronounces, that all that can be infer'd from them, is, that there are some Kinds of Blasphemy punishable by Death, others to be restrain'd in a milder way, to the Glory of G O D and publick Good, which to deny must open a Door to all Errors and immoralities, and puts it out of the Magistrate's Power to be a Terror to evil-Doers.

CONSIDERING how directly all the Particulars of this mighty Charge had been obviated, in my Account of the Proceedings on the 4th Article in the Tryal, and the Doctrine and Principles advanced and maintain'd in opposition to me on this Head, were loaded there with most wicked and absurd Consequences and this Author himself pointed at as abetting them at the Expence of gross and flat Contradictions, who wou'd suspect that one of so much Fire and Intrepidity wou'd tamely overlook so heavy an Imputation, as is there brought, not only against his dear self, and the rest of his angry Brethren, but Orthodox Councils, vast Assemblies of the Clergy, and some of the first Reformers themselves. Is there not reason to question his Courage and Zeal, when he is deaf to so loud a Challenge, or to imagine there is something in the Cause that has dispirited him to such a Degree, that among all his few Thoughts he durst not venture to offer any to ward off the Injury done to all the flaming Sons of Violence and Constraint ?

BUT

BUT as he has left the Arguings on that Head entirely untouch'd, I am content to let them stand in Judgement with the World, as they are set forth in the *Tryal*, from p. 120, and only consider what he now advances, and observe how grossly he betrays, rather than defends the *Synod* by this Bundle of his few *Thoughts*.

WHETHER he had any Ground to charge me with *talking in an unwary Manner*, may be seen from the *Review* that is now taken of that Conversation, which has made so much Noise among us. But as to the unpardonable Crime of *confuting the Doctrine of the Westminster Confession, and wresting the Word there to give it a bloody Meaning*, it must either recoil on himself, or that admired Book. For how ever I shou'd be in no Pain to have this Matter made clearly out against me, that I misapplied the Word in the Confession, and took it in another Meaning than the Compilers intended, when without blushing this Man of Orthodoxy does me notoriously serve the Scriptures themselves at the rate, yet it were no hard Matter to make it evident that the Doctrine of the Confession on that Head, is just the same that I charg'd it with, and the very Word SUPPRESS, design'd to import another *Resentment* than *knocking o' the Head*, where there is no other Text adduced that has the most distant Respect to *Blasphemy*, but only that *Levit. xxiv. 16*, by which the *Blasphemer* was to suffer *Death*. But as I shall not contend with the *Author* about the Doctrine of the Confession, or the Meaning of that Word, let him have the Honour of fixing on that celebrated Abridgement of Christian Principles, the Doctrine of *vesting the Magistrate with a Power to bear down, restrain or check* every Kind and Degree of *Blasphemy, in the milder Way*

any other *Resentment* than *knocking o' the Head*, which is no other Principle, than what I call'd *wicked and unchristian*, and must be bold to say, I proved to be so, till this Author or some abler Champion shall venture to offer a few *Thoughts* in Answer to the Arguments that were offer'd in support of my *Proposition*. And to give the public a full View of this blessed Doctrine, which is palm'd on the *Confession*, and with such an Air of Triumph brought as a main part of the Charge against me, I wou'd make these few Observations on this Head.

1st THAT this Author plainly and directly pleads for the Necessity and Usefulness of *Force* in matters purely religious, and which do not affect the Peace of civil Society. For sure some kinds of *Blasphemy* must be accounted such; and yet these according to him, the *Magistrate* may and ought to bear down, restrain and check in the milder way of other *Resentments*, than *knocking on the Head*. But can any thing be more astonishing, than to observe a Protestant, nay a *Dissenting Minister* call in the Terrors of Men to support the Interest and Cause of Religion? For is it not evident at first View, that the Application of these can only make Men Hypocrites, and is opposite to the very Being of true Religion, which shou'd be receiv'd by a willing Choice, and be influenced by no other than the Terrors of the Lord? And is it not vain to think of prescribing Measures where the *Magistrate* must stop, if he may restrain every kind of *Blasphemy*, in a way milder than Death? For the same Reason that impowers the *Magistrate* to restrain in this milder way, will bear him out in the Rigor of Death, when the former is ineffectual, unless he be bound to suppress *Blasphemy*, and yet not obliged to do all in his Power necessary for that End.

2dly. UPON this Author's Scheme the Magistrate is absolute Judge of whatever may be accounted *Blasphemy*, for he must *suppress every kind of it* either by *Death*, or some *milder way*; and must not have a Right to determine the Nature of the Crime; that is to be the Object of his *Resentment* either to the *knocking People on the Head* for it, or *straining it in a milder way*? Now I shou'd think a violent Prejudice against this Sett of Principles that by them the Magistrate is vested with a kind of *papal Authority*, and he is directly made Judge of *Truth and Error*; if the CONFESSIO itself did not in express Terms declare *he has Authority*, and it is his Duty to take Order, that the *TRUTH of GOD be kept PURE AND ENTIRE* and that *HERESIES* as well as *Blasphemies* be *suppress'd*, and that this Author agreeably enough to this Standard of Orthodoxy, says that *denying* *kinds of Blasphemy as are not punishable by Death*, must be *restrain'd in a milder way*, must open a DOOR to all ERRORS. And to be sure it were great Vanity and Presumption then, to suppose that Principle so directly avow'd, and supported with such substantial Authorities, wou'd be sufficient to demolish any Scheme, of which it is a plain immediate Consequence. But may we not without all becoming Modesty enquire whence he derives this Commission, and Branch of his Power? One wou'd think the Warrant need to be very expresse and plain, before the *Truth of God* shou'd be in such keeping; when there are strong Presumptions, that *civil Magistrates* are seldom well qualified for such a Trust, and the matter of Fact shews that this wou'd rather *suppress TRUTH*, *Heresies and Blasphemies*.

CAN it be thought any Symptom of an *evil Eye* toward the *Confession*, to doubt if there be sufficient Authority in any or all the Texts cited under this Article, to lodge such a Power in the Hands of the *Magistrate*? when it wou'd reflect upon the Wisdom, Goodness and Justice of God, to vest the *Magistrate* with any such Authority, as wou'd turn to his own Dishonour, and the common Prejudice of Men. For by this means, *Blasphemy* wou'd be the most uncertain precarious thing in the World: For as it is the *Magistrate's* Authority and Duty to suppress *Blasphemy*, it belongs alike to every one in that Character and Station, and that is *Blasphemy* to each of them, which they in their Consciences esteem to be so: And thus *Blasphemy* shall not only vary as Men do change their Climes, but often as the Humour and Caprice of the *Powers that be* in any Country shall veer & alter. And if it shou'd be pretended, that this only is the Prerogative of *Magistrates* that are right and sound in the Faith, whenever it is determined who shall have the Right to declare what *Magistrates* are so, and a Power to bind the Hands of all others from executing this Authority, the Point shall be given up at once. But as this is wholly impracticable, so it is mere Chicanry, to plead that none but orthodox *Magistrates* may claim and execute this Power; for every one is such in his own Eyes. And alas! how soon wou'd this Principle turn the World into a Scene of *Horror and Confusion*, and the Christian Church into a *Field of Blood*; when the same Opinions are by different Parties judg'd holy and *blasphemous*, and they must always be suppressing one another, just as they have the upper hand, and the *Magistrate* on their Side. A most agreeable Prospect to all the Patrons of wholesome Severities!

3dly, THIS Author, for I shall say nothing yet of the Confession, has most miserably perverted these Texts of Scripture, which he says support the Doctrine of the *Magistrate's* Power to suppress Blasphemy, in the Sense he explains it. For let these Texts be compar'd with the most exact and critical Care, it can never be infer'd from them, that there are *Kinds of Blasphemy* mentioned, implied or presuppos'd in any of them, that are to be restrained in a milder way than that of Death. Was he not told in the Tryal, that they were nothing to the Purpose of suppressing Blasphemy in any manner, except that one in *Leviticus*? It wou'd have been very obliging, to have instructed those who are slow to learn, how this Inference might be drawn from these Passages. Why did not this mighty Dab of Mood and Figure give us a new Specimen of his rare Talent in forming Syllogisms, by which it might appear, as a natural Consequence and Conclusion from these Texts, that the Magistrate may and ought to restrain in a milder way, these kinds of Blasphemy which do not deserve to be punished by Death? Why did not this flaming Man for the Confession show as great a Concern for rescuing the Texts, from the corrupt glosses I had put upon them p. 130. as he did for my *wresting* a Word in the Confession? Especially when the Honor of this darling Book did in his Apprehension so much depend on the right Understanding of them, and cou'd be defended no way, but by making this Inference which, if we'll take his Word for it, is all that can follow from them.

TEXTS have often been quoted for some resembling Sound they may have to the Doctrine they are brought to confirm; but these do not chime in the least to the *Magistrate's* Power of

pressing Blasphemy. And is not this very Instance sufficient then to warn the World, what a glorious System of Principles they might expect, if once it you'd be establish'd, that *Scripture Consequences* are the very Doctrines of the *Scriptures*, and a Sett of such wise Heads trusted with drawing them? For this may convince every one, that their Skill and Dexterity this way is so extraordinary, that they can infer any thing from whatever Text they please. Is not this enough to make all the Lovers of Truth very cautious how they swallow any Principle, for which some Men may cap Texts of Scripture to them? And to make this as clear as Noon-day, let us take a short Review of these remarkable Texts, by which, if we may believe this Author, they *who look not on the Confession with an evil Eye*, will see the *Magistrate's* Power of bearing down Blasphemy in Jew and Gentile plainly supported.

As to that memorable Text in *Isa. xlix. 13*, supposing it vested Kings and Queens with the Character & Authority of nursing Fathers and nursing Mothers to the Church of Christ; yet upon a just Consideration will signify very little to support his Doctrine, and the Inference he wou'd draw, unless he cou'd find a Country, where the Cudgel and Scourge are more the Badges and Instruments of a good Nurse than the Breast and Cradle, and that she is counted a good Nurse of her own Children, who busies herself in whipping others not hers, nor belonging to her Nursery; as certainly the Jews do not, if the Church is the Nursery of Kings and Queens.

AND must not any be hard put to for a Support to this rare Doctrine of *restraining and bearing down* material Blasphemy in a milder Way than Death, when

when they lay hold upon these Words of the Psalmist, *Pf. 122. 9. Because of the House of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.* For is not this an excellent Proof of the *Magistrate's* Power to suppress one way or another every kind of *Blasphemy*, that this inspired Author, declares that out of Love to the House of God, he wou'd seek the good of *Jerusalem*? Is not this a strong Presumption that he speaks here not in the Capacity of a King, but as a Prophet, when he expresses such affectionate Regard for the House of God, which only was to be built in *Jerusalem* after his Death? or supposing it to be meant of the Tabernacle, is there one Word in the *Psalms* that sounds like the Authority of a Prince? And shou'd not Dissenters remember how often they are obliged to distinguish between the Proceedings of *David* in the different Characters of Prophet and King, when the Regulations he made in the Worship of God are urged as a Precedent for the Rites and Ceremonies established in the Church by Civil Authority?

BUT can there be a more rambling way of arguing, than to prove some kinds of *Blasphemy* punishable by Death, and others to be restrained in milder Way, because in *Ezra vii. 23.*—*Artaxerxes* empowers the Ruler of the Children of *Israel* to inflict the several Punishments on such as did not observe the Law of God and the Law of the King. It wou'd be very difficult to show that this King of *Babylon* was inspired, when he gave this Commission, without which it wou'd be no better Proof for the *Magistrate's* applying force in Matters purely religious, than the rare one we have in the Commission for the *Magistrate's* Power to call Synods, to be present at them, and to provide, that whatsoever be transacted be according to the Mind of God, that He

having gathered all the Chief Priests and Scribes of the People together, he demanded of them where Christ shou'd be born. Math. ii. 4:

THUS have I examined these Texts separately ; and may I hope without Offence, pronounce they are at least in this view, miserably perverted, when they are brought as a Support for the *Magistrate's* persecuting Men to the *Glory of God, and the Public Good.* For *restraining in a milder Way other Blasphemies than are punishable by Death,* will in many cases be found *persecuting* even for *Conscience* sake, and that even where the *Magistrate* happens to be *Orthodox,* and the poor sufferer guilty of what may be some kind of *Blasphemy.* I shall not insist on the *Magistrate's* Power being confined to civil Concernments, and consequently having no Authority to *restrain in a milder Way than Death, Blasphemy,* that does not in the least affect these civil Concernments, but illustrate this by the *Testimony* of an eminent Divine, fam'd for *Orthodoxy, deep Learning,* and homely Strains of *rapturous Piety,* the great Mr. *Rutherford,* who p. 356 of his *due Right of Presbytery* declares, *all who believe BLASPHEMIES to be Truth, are not to be reckoned among FORMAL Blasphemers, whose Malice carrieth them on to rail upon the unspotted Ways of God.* And since I design no more by producing his Authority, than to show the Distinction, on which I placed my whole Defence, for I do not pretend to insinuate, that he carries it as far against the *Magistrate's* Power of punishing *formal Blasphemy,* as the nature of the thing and the Gospel requires; may be entertained by a Mind not tinctured with heretical Pravity. It may be proper here also to set down the Opinion of another celebrated *Scotch Divine,* and a Member of the *Assembly at Westminster,* Mr. G. Gillespie, in

in his *Aaron's Rod blossoming*, p. 186, he says, ' But
 ' the Magistrate tho' Christian and godly, do
 ' not *ex Natura Rei*, in Regard of the Nature o
 ' his particular Vocation, intend the Glory o
 ' Jesus Christ as Mediator and King of the
 ' Church---. So then the Glory of Christ as Me
 ' diator, and King of the Church, is to the Min
 ' stry, both *Finis Operis* & *Finis Operantis*. To th
 ' Magistrate tho' Christian, it (the Glory o
 ' Christ) is only *Finis Operantis*; that is, it is th
 ' End of the Magistrate, but not the End of Ma
 ' gistracy: And again, p. 190, ' The Civil Powe
 ' hath for the Object of it, the Things of this Li
 ' Matters of Peace, War, Justice, the King's Ma
 ' ters & the Country---Matters, those Things th
 ' belong to the external Man. ' Among which
 presume, Matters of pure Revelation are not
 be reckoned, and yet several Kinds of Blasp
 my may be confined to them.

BUT still I wou'd have the Reader observe, th
 I only pretend these Texts do not prove the Do
 rines he brings them to support, while they a
 taken severally; but I won't answer for what m
 be inferr'd from them, when this Author appl
 his Secret of comparing them, for that he has ke
 to himself; and it were rash to pronounce w
 Wonders he may work by his mysterious Skill.

AND in the mean time I shall now proceed
 the last Observation on this Head, that since t
 candid Author does reassume, and strenuously ma
 tain the Doctrine which the Synod thought fit
 Drop, as not proper for them to determine, fo
 appears from the Minute on the fourth Article, th
 I abstracted from that *Restriction* of it's not be
 Blasphemy capitally punishable, and asserted that
 a Jew to deny Christ to be God, was not that

Degree of Blasphemy punishable by the Magistrate, which is the very Proposition they were not willing to determine ; and yet now this Writer sets it forth as the Doctrine of the Confession, that the civil Magistrate has a Power to bear down, or restrain Blasphemy in Jew and Gentile ; by comparing the Synod's Conduct, with this Defence of them, I say, we may in the Issue see, that great is the *Power of Truth*, and that however for a while it be held in *Unrighteousness*, it will be ready some time or another to force it's own way, and by the Confession of such as have been long injurious to it, come to be publicly own'd and honor'd ; of which we have the most clear and convincing Proof in the Case before us. For either the Synod did look upon the Principles maintain'd by me on this Head to be orthodox and sound, or with this Author, they were convinced that my Proposition was false, and flatly repugnant to the Confession, but were satisfied to bear with me in these different Sentiments, for some private prudential Reasons. But either of these ways Truth breaks forth triumphant, and leads in Captivity the Errors, to which it had been so long Captive.

For if the Synod, *i. e.* the Majority who voted for dropping the fourth Article did look upon my Principles as sound, as it is plain some of them have better Sense than doubt of them in the least, and yet have subscribed the Confession, while others as well as this Author thought them directly contrary to this Standard of *Orthodoxy*, can it be any longer pleaded, that the *Confession* is a certain means of preserving Unanimity in Principle, and is form'd in such determinate Phrases, that they more particularly fix the meaning of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, than the Words he has thought fit in his

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Infinite

Infinite Wisdom to make use of there, and consequently are better calculated to keep *Error* and *Heresy* out of the Church, than these sacred *Oracles* themselves. Since therefore some understand the Magistrate's Power of suppressing Blasphemies and Heresies, in the qualified Sense of his encouraging pious and learned Divines, to expose them by their arguing and writing, and others believe it in the strict and rigorous Sense of restraining by moderate Penalties, as the Managers in my Tryal did more vehemently contend, can any thing be more evident, then that the Phrases in the Confession are understood and subscribed in different Senses, which is so much matter of Fact, that we see whenever any Point has happen'd to fall under Debate, and different Subscribers have treated of it, they widely differ from one another, as is manifest beyond all Contradiction, from the Writings of Mr. *Kennedy* and Mr. *Iredel*, upon no less Subject than the Union of the divine and human Natures in the Person of Christ. What is come then of all the boasted Usefulness of fixing and determining the Meaning of the Scriptures, by this unbending, inordinate Rule of Faith? It seems there is a *Latitude of Expression* in the *Confession*, as well as in the Scriptures. What then are the Phrases in this well-adjusted System become so supple as to bend to all Notions, that this and the other Man does take up, of the Truth pointed at in them? And are they of such Extent, that Persons who think very differently concerning the Doctrines, may safely enough assent to the Expressions, and every Man explain them his own way? How long then has the World been deceived, as if all who subscribed that Collection of Christian Doctrines were harmonious, and perfectly agreed, and that their do-

is a greater Security of their being *orthodox*, than consenting to the lively *Oracles* of Truth. No smaller part than a Majority of the Synod, nay, indeed all but two or three may drop, as a *Controversy* not proper for them to determine, what others may plead is expressly determin'd in the *Confession*.

BUT if the Meaning of that surprizing Vote was such, that most of them were in Reality of the same Mind with this Writer; and look'd upon my Principles as false, and flatly repugnant to the *Confession*, but were willing to bear with me in these different Sentiments, will it be any longer pleaded, that all the Points in that large Book are of such moment, that they ought to be insisted on as terms of Communion; and that if one never so well qualified otherwise for the Ministry, shou'd differ in Opinion from the Majority of the *Westminster-Assembly*, in one or more of the numerous propositions contained in it, it is the Duty and Wisdom of a Church so pure and perfectly reform'd, to deny the right hand of Fellowship to him: For whatever some may alledge, and give out to the world, as the Judgment of the Synod, it is plain in my Case, tho' I advanced Principles which I owned, and declared to be contrary to the *Confession*, about the Extent of the *Magistrate's* Authority and Duty, the Majority was so good as to drop the matter, and if I had pay'd the Complement they expected, to their own Power, wou'd have allowed me to think differently of the *Magistrate's* Power from the *Confession*, and make it a little, with respect to Religious Matters, as I pleas'd; & at least for some little time longer, lived in Communion with me. Let it not therefore pass for current Truth any longer, that the Synod once a day wou'd not have suffered any Member to

profess contrary to the Doctrine of the Confession and how wisely then this Author makes it a sever Ditto in his Charge against me, that I had a View to confute the Doctrine of the Westminster-Confession, is easy to judge.

BUT however I have done with my Observations on the Author, I am not willing to drop the Subject, however glad the Synod was to do it, and too hot for their handling. But must appeal to the World, how unaccountable this Proceeding is, the Synod after they had taken this Matter into the most serious Deliberation, in calm Blood declared it was *not proper for them to determine a Controversy concerning the Extent of the Magistrate's Power*; and yet these very Men have *subscrib'd the Confession*, and still continue to mend and enforce their Acts obliging all Intrans into the Ministry to profess their belief of it, as founded on the Word of God, when the Point of the Magistrate's Power is settled and determin'd in the most nice and particular manner. For there Ch. 23. § 3, we are taught, ' the Civil Magistrate hath Authority, and it is his Duty ' to take order, that Unity and Peace be preserved ' in the Church, that the Truth of God be kept pure ' and entire, that all Blasphemies and Heresies ' be suppressed, all Corruptions and Abuses of ' Worship and Discipline prevented, or reformed ' and all the Ordinances of God duly settled, and ' ministred and observed. For the better effecting ' whereof, he hath power to call Synods, to be ' present at them, and to provide that whatsoever ' is transacted in them, be according to the Mind ' of God'. Now when it was openly asserted, that the Magistrate's Jurisdiction was confin'd to Civil Concernments, his whole Power derived from the Light of Nature, and the Salvation of Men, none of his imma-

ate *Business and Care*, by *Vertue of his Office*, and that for these Reasons a *Jew's denying Christ to be God* was not that sort of *Blasphemy* which is punishable by the *Magistrate*, and this was the *Extent of his Power* they did not think proper to determine, when yet they had not only in a critical *Time* subscribed a *Decision* upon this *Head*, but make it necessary for all who hereafter associate with them to profess their assent to it ; Can we think they were shock'd as to the *Truth of the Doctrine of the Confession* ? Or is it ever to be vindicated, they shou'd keep that as Part of an *Exclusive Test* among them, which they durst not abide by, and declared it was not proper for them to determine about ? Can it be reasonable to bind Men to the *Confession* by the Lump, when some part of it is not the proper *Business of the Synod* ? Or did they only drop it for a more convenient Season, as being apprehensive it might bear hard on themselves as *Dissenters*, when in Fact they contradict the *Authority*, which by profession they lodge in the *Hands of the Civil Powers* ? Were they willing to lay their Finger on this *Article of the Confession*, and keep it out of Sight, till the blessed days shou'd come, when they might have a *nursing Father* to the Church of their own tutoring, who wou'd reform it according to their Mind, & that then he shou'd have the *Plenitude of this Power*, & nothing to controul him in the *Execution of it* ? And 'tis certain, this Part of the *Confession* as it was first framed under, so it is only calculated for an *Establishment*. And to make all this a Branch of the *Magistrate's Authority and Duty*, and which consequently he is to enforce with *Penalties* great or small, is everfive of *Nonconformity* in any Shape. And therefore I am now free to tell the World, that this part of the *Confession* can't be founded on, but
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is contrary to the Word of God, and that as the *Scriptures* already considered, so all the others adduced for the proof of it, must be nothing to the purpose ; unless it cou'd be made out, as one of the Managers in my Tryal roundly asserted, that the *Judicial* Laws of Moses are still obligatory on Christian States and Kingdoms, and that Christian Princes have all that power in *sacred* matters, which the Rulers of the Jews had. And if so, farewell *Nonconformity*, whenever these of the Establishment think it due time to strike in, and end the Fray among us ; for it is plain, on this Foot all the Rites, Ceremonies and Regulations introduc'd into the Church, may be abundantly justified. And upon the whole, let every one judge, if the *Party* can have any longer Reason to complain, that there are no Faults pointed to in the *Confession*, and if Matters are not at a fine Pass among them, when their *Candidates* must *subscribe* what none of them will undertake to defend ; and against which their own Practice of dissenting, and the demonstrative Reasons in my Tryal bear a loud Testimony.

BUT it is high time to hasten to the last Particular brought in *Charge* against me ; it is wholly new, and I dare say, entirely his own ; and cou'd never have enter'd into his Head, if the Fever of his Zeal had not risen to a prodigious Height. For

* where he says, I point out the whole *subscribing*

Party

* 4thly in this offensive Letter, Mr. Nevin by a dark Hint, points out the whole *subscribing* Party, as a Set of Men full of Malice, void of Charity, and not only blind, but affectedly so, (*vide* Page third of his Letter to Mr. Smith) This is a Sample of that Charity which thinketh no Evil, so often call'd for. *Overtures* set in a fair Light, p. 60.

full of Malice and void of Charity : There is not the least Word of Malice, or want of Charity, nor the darkeſt Hint relating to the *Subſcribing Body*. For the Perſons there ſpoken of, are *Strangers*, and ſome *old Friends and Acquaintance*, under this particular Limitation, that in the preſent Ferment had been very free with my Reputation, which cou'd not in any Reaſon be applied to the whole *Subſcribing Party* ; for it was impoſſible to ſuppoſe, that by this time they had every ſingle Man of them, heard of the *Affidavit*, which had been only made a few Days before the writing of the Letter, and was even a good part of them kept as a Secret. It is plain therefore, that the many who are ſet forth, as having given too much Proof, that they were very eaſy to receive an ill Impreſſion &c. but very difficult, if ever to admit a charitable Opinion, muſt in all fair Conſtruction be underſtood of thoſe *Strangers*, and *old Friends and Acquaintance*, who had in the preſent Ferment been very free with my Reputation, and ſo muſt be found within theſe Bounds, where the *Affidavit* was by this Time ſpreading its poiſonous Breath. And of many there, I cou'd give the moſt flagrant Inſtances of believing vile ſcandalous Reports, againſt ſuch over-bearing Evidence, as cou'd not be reſiſted by any, who did not affect to be blind. So that as I knew many of the *Subſcribing Party* to be Men of quite another Spirit, thoſe of that denomination were not in my Eye, when I drew that Character of ſome Men's Conduct and Diſpoſition. But I muſt ſay if I had applied it to ſome who glory in that *Party Name*, my *Excluders* did enough in the Proceſs and Iſſue of my *Trial* to have juſtified ſuch a Representation of them. For, cou'd any but ſuch as wink'd hard, have miſs'd to ſee very clear and ſatisfying Evidence in my Answer

to

to the Libel, that I was far from uttering Words dishonourable to our great Redeemer, from flying to Evasion, and being inconsistent with my self in the Use of it, from giving an Explanation which sounded harsh in pious Ears, from treating the important Subject of Conversation with an unbecoming Air, and without Gravity and Seriousness, from offering railing and indecent Expressions, from burlesquing the Scriptures, and mentioning in a ludicrous way the common Confession of this Church? And what can be tho't of these who were present at the Reasonings on the fifth Article and did not observe, that requiring me under the Penalty of Exclusion, to make a Declaration of my Belief of the supreme Deity of Christ, when a Process was commenc'd against me, was a direct and formal INQUISITION, and an open violation of the apostolic Injunction, 1 Tim. v 19. Must not these in Manner have been blind indeed? And whether they affected to be so or not, let every one judge, when it was contrary to the usual and known Method of issuing Scandal, in this and other Presbyterian Churches. All which I presume, is very consistent with the Charity that thinketh no Evil, i. e. does not suspect and foment Jealousies, without any certain and evident Reason: At the same time it neither is nor can be blind, when the Evil is open and manifest.

* HE comes in the next place to consider the Synod's Carriage towards me. But to lay the full Ground for exculpating the Synod, he must

* NOW let us a little consider the SYNOD's Carriage towards Mr. Nevins; the Conversation happen'd in and about September, 1723, and was no Secret in the Country, the same run near six Months; yet the Presbytery of Down had made

oul of the Presbytery of *Down* and me. But in his usual manner, he confounds the most distinct and distant things. For tho' the *Conversation* happen'd at the time he mentions, and that one of the *Affidavit-men*, who, as appears by *Dr. Smith's Testimony*, p. 12. did not, upon account of his going out and know how the *Conversation* was brought in, or what the *Words in the Affidavit* related, had talk'd of it in some few places; and one or two of the *Presbytery* had heard of it, yet upon my challenging the worthy *Captain and his wife Man*, and laying before such as enquired at me, the Purport and scope of the *Conversation*, the Story died all at once; and there was far from being any *Fama Clamosa* about it, till some little time before the extraordinary Steps were taken to dress up the *Affidavit* in that frightful Shape, in which it scar'd so many out of their Charity and Senses too. If this *Writer* had resolv'd to take Notice of the least Circumstance that tended to set this Matter in a true Light, you'd he have overlook'd what was offer'd by an aged Minister of that *Presbytery*, p. 16. 'that the *Affair* having broke out since the meeting of the *Presbytery*, they had no Opportunity to move in it at all.' But if this unfair Account of his were true, and the *Presbytery* had been really faulty, he pretends, will ever this justify the *Synod* in

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quiry into this matter, upon the *Fama Clamosa*, as they ought have done. Mr. *Nevin* is so far from being ashamed of what he said in Mr. *Hannington's*, that he publishes it to the World, and comes his own Accuser; moreover, by spreading his printed Matter among the Members of the *SYNOD* while they were sitting, gives them a fair Challenge to defend the twenty third Chapter of their *Confession*, concerning the *Magistrate's Power*.

their irregular Proceedings, of commencing a Process in the *supreme Judicature*, and overleaping the common and reasonable Forms in such Case ?

BUT let every one again consider what a Sample we have of this *Author's Modesty and Candour* when he rallies me so severely for being *asham'd* of *little of what I had said in Mr. Han--'s, that I publish'd it to the World*, and so harden'd, as thereby to become my own *Accuser*. Now, what I publish'd was so little Cause of *Shame*, that when the *Party* came to a close and distinct View of it, they durst not venture to condemn it : For in reality it amounted to no more than this, that the *Jews are to be tolerated in a Christian Country* ; and yet in this *Author's* fair and candid Account of Matters, this Defence that satisfied every *impartial Man*, and confounded every *angry and prejudic'd one*, made me become my own *Accuser*. May I not here turn the Tables on him and cry out in the moving Strain of an elegant *Writer* of his own Side, *ubi Pudor, ubi Fides !*

BUT the great Provocation is still behind, and which doubtless is the true Secret of their Carriage towards me. For he says, ' by spreading my Letter while the Synod was sitting, I gave them a fair Challenge to defend their Confession ; ' and honestly lay the whole Stress of the Treatment I met with on the

THE SYNOD could not but resent such ill Usage ; one of their Members made Complaint of it, yet they did not carry their Resentment high, for they ask'd of him to wipe the Offence given, by a voluntary Declaration of the Supreme Deity of our dear Redeemer ; which had he done, the SYNOD appear'd not only satisfied, but willing to do what was necessary for them to do in his Vindication ; they therefore intreated him from these

Point, when he says, '*the Synod cou'd not but resent such ill Usage : And one of their Members made Complaint of it.*' Where these following Particulars are very remarkable. 1st, That to offer an Objection against the received Sense of one Proposition in the Confession, is a fair Challenge to the Synod, and such Usage as they cou'd not think of putting up. How sincere the PARTY then was, in calling upon and provoking the *Non-Subscribers* to point out their Exceptions against that Book, and what their End was in doing so, we have a shrewd Presumption in the Measure they met out to me. We see how patiently they wou'd have born it, and to what Account it wou'd have turn'd, for tho' they durst not defend it, yet they wou'd still let it stand without the least Alteration, and neither part with *Horn or Hoof of it.* 2^{dly}, That their *Resentment of such Usage* was the true Spring of all the Trouble the Synod gave me. One of the *Managers* in the Speech, by which he open'd up the Defence of the *Libel*, assur'd every one present, that their Warmth in that Cause did not flow from the impure Springs of Malice or Party-spirit.' But this bold Champion scorns to assemble the matter so, but bluntly avows, that *Resentment of ill Usage* push'd the Synod on. And by

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this,

res, the Glory of GOD, their Edification, and for his own sake, to make a voluntary Declaration of that Article of the Christian Faith, that he refused to do it, alledging, that he stood accus'd (though it's plain he was his own Accuser) and the SYNOD did not regard him at this time as a Criminal, for his Name was call'd in the Roll every where as a Judge, which had they regarded him as a Criminal charg'd with so heavy a Guilt, as denying the LORD that bought him, (which is insinuated in his Reasonings) they would not have done it; for it appears to me contrary to the Light of Nature, that a Man should be at the same time a Judge, and under Process for so heinous

this, we know how to understand this *Writer* and *the Party*, when they sanctify their Eagerness in this Affair with the Name of *Zeal*; that this last is what they wou'd choose generally to avow to the World, but that the true Cause was their own *Spleen*, and their *Resentment of such ill Usage*, as to give them a *fair Challenge to defend their Confession*. Nor is it indeed an uncommon thing to disguise Men's Passion and ill Nature, under that specious Pretence. For as the *Spectator* admirably observes, ' Ill-nature ' is a dreadful Imitator of Zeal. Many a good ' Man may have a natural Rancour and Malice in ' his Heart, which has been in some Measure quelled and subdued by Religion; but if it finds any ' Pretence of breaking out, which does not seem ' to him inconsistent with the Duties of a Christian, ' it throws off all Restraint, and rages in it's full ' Fury. Zeal therefore is a great Ease to a malicious Man, by making him believe, he does God ' Service, whilst he is gratifying the Bent of a perverse revengeful Temper.'

3dly, THAT the falling upon me in this manner was preconcerted without Doors, for it appears

heinous a Crime; whereas it is known, that his Name was called over among the other Members of the SYNOD, (except when there was a Vote passing which concerned himself) he was not regarded as a Criminal by them, nor was he disqualified from being a Judge with them upon any other Account, but his acting such an unbecoming Part, as (I believe) will exclude him from being a Judge or Ruler in any Court on Earth, as may appear from the Reasonings already offer'd, in Favour of the SYNOD's Overture, which we now apply to Mr. *Nevin's* Case, who would not open his Mouth to glorify in his REDEEMER, and edify his offended Brethren, who had in the greatest Meekness, ask'd a Reason of his Hope. Days were spent in Harangues, which might have been prevented by his declaring to the Assembly That he believed the Answer to the sixth Question in our *SHORT CATECHISM*, or spoke in Words to that Effect.

from the Order of his representing the Particulars of this Affair, that their *Resentment of such ill Usage*, was the Rise of, and Antecedent to the *Member's making Complaint* of it. And lastly, that by the *Synod* in this elaborate Piece, we are to understand the *ruling Party*; the Junctō of *able Men* that rule the Roalt; for nothing can be plainer, it was only *THEY* *resented such ill Usage*, before the *Member complain'd*, and *THEY* forc'd it's Way into the *Synod's* Consideration. Nor is it perhaps an improper way of speaking, to give the Name of the whole to a few, who are sure of a *Majority* for their Seconds. But be this as it will, all the foregoing Particulars are what the wiser Heads of the *Party* are very careful to conceal and keep out of Sight. But *Truth* is a dangerous thing to temper with, it is often like *Quick-silver*, that after all the *Empiric's* Art to disguise and kill it, does sometimes not only show itself inpart, but *redintegrates*, and appears in it's natural genuine Form.

It may be imagin'd he extenuates the matter, when he adds, 'yet they did not carry their *Resentment* high, for they ask'd of him to wipe off the Offence by giving a *voluntary Declaration* &c.' And thus they wou'd have put up *this ill Usage*, if I wou'd have made my Submission to a Claim of *Power* they had much

LET any unbyas'd Reader peruse his own Narrative of the Conversation he had in Mr. *Hannington's*, and judge if this was a *severe Demand*, in the *SYNOD*; if they deserve to be accus'd as treating him as barbarously, as he would have been us'd in *Spain*, or *Italy*, by the *Inquisition*. Let the judicious part of Mankind peruse what has been quoted from the third page of his Letter to Mr. *Smith*, against the Majority of the *SYNOD* (who are *Subscribers*) where they are represented by a dark Hint, *full of Malice*, &c. and judge whether they are not in reality good natur'd, in not resenting such Calumny published

much at Heart. It was this they *intreated* me, to do from these *Motives*, of the *Glory of God &c.* For it is plain they cou'd not want Evidence of my *Orthodoxy* in the Point of the *supreme Deity of Christ*, if they had regarded the *Testimonies* of the *Reverend Messrs. Boyse and Shannon*, nay of the *Member* himself, who tabled the *Complaint* against me. But all this wou'd not do, for if they had acquiesc'd in them as satisfactory, however this might sufficiently answer the *Ends of God's Glory and my Vindication*, it wou'd never do for their *Edification*, i. e. gratify their *Humours*, as that Word is too generally used. The Case then stands fairly thus: Upon the most serious *Deliberation* I was persuaded, that as an *Accusation* shou'd not be received against an *Elder*, but out of the *Mouth of two or three Witnesses*, so it was directly *sinful*, by any *Submission* to strengthen *Men's Hands*, in the *Violation* of that *Apostolic Injunction*; when the *Synod*, or *Party*, for that is all one, knew this from my *printed Letter*, and many solemn *Declarations* in their *Presence*, they *intreated* me, from the *Motives of God's Glory*, and my own *Sake*, to transgress a plain *Rule of the Gospel*, and prove my self a *supple yielding Knave*, who wou'd sacrifice *Conscience and Honor*, to preserve

lished to the World by him; whom they were ready to forgive all his ill Language against themselves, if he would but satisfy them, as to the *unguarded Expressions* he had us'd with respect to *CHRIST God-head*, which they thought he might do *voluntarily*, before they would exert their *proper Authority* over him, who at his *Ordination* had solemnly profess'd *Subjection to his Brethren in the Lord*; but he refus'd to satisfy the *SYNOD*, either in a *voluntary Declaration*, or when he was required; They thereupon had no longer *Freedom* to continue him a *Ruler in God's House* with them, who would not be ruled, even when the Matter *enjoyn'd* was *Duty*, if it had not been *enjoyn'd*, and sure could not become *sinful* by their *Injunction*. See *Overtures set in a fair Light*, p. 61, 62.

my Membership in the *Synod*, and the good Word of such as wou'd little have regarded me, after I had *edified* them in this Manner.

BUT still his boldest stroke in *Defence of the Synod* is yet behind, and is such a Master piece of *Assurance*, and such a barefac'd Attempt to impose on the *common Sense* of Mankind, that it is not to be conceiv'd how any Man cou'd venture on it, whose *Imagination* had not got the better of his Reason and Modesty, by some violent *Paroxysm of intemperate Zeal*. For he adds, in his own easy, natural Way of writing, 'But he refus'd to do it, alledging that he stood accus'd, (tho' 'tis plain he was his own Accuser) and the Synod did not regard him at this time as a Criminal, for his Name was called in the Roll every Sederunt as a Judge, which had they regarded him as a Criminal, as denying the LORD that bought him, (which is insinuated in his Reasoning) they wou'd not have done it; For it appears to me, contrary to the Light of Nature, that the Man shou'd be at the same time a Judge and under *Process* for so heinous a Crime.' It is not to be expected that in the *Rage of Zeal* a Man shou'd write correctly, or be consistent with himself, more than in the Heat of a Fever. It is not to be thought much of, that he shou'd pretend it was all Sham in me to alledge I stood accus'd, when at the same Breath he wou'd have every one believe, *it is plain I accused my self*, and makes no Bones of it to add, '*the Synod did not regard him at this time as a Criminal.*' It may be thought trifling with the World, to say any thing in Answer to this, if it were not to be fear'd that the poor Man surely believes himself, so many may be weak enough to take his Word for it. And therefore let me only observe to him and others, that

that as we have his own Authority for it, twice, that I accused my self, and wou'd it not be greatly abusing the Synod, to suppose they did not after all regard me as a Criminal, so it is altogether new and surprizing how any Judicature civil or Ecclesiastical can otherwise regard any as a Criminal, than they did me, if we owe any Regard to their own Minutes, for there, it is own'd after the first Motion was made against me, 'The judgement of several members was ask'd, as to the manner of trying & issuing this Matter, and the Committee were not to be accounted Accusers (more than the rest of their Brethren) for drawing up the Grounds of Offence taken at me, p. 32. That a Complaint was tabled against me, and a Charge drawn up, and Managers in the Cause allow'd on both Sides. p. 83. And Liberty reserv'd to the Synod to enquire if there be any matter of Offence in the first two Articles of the Charge against me, for which they shou'd think me censurable' at that time, tho' these very Articles were referr'd to the Presbytery of Down. p. 100. and in the decisive Vote, 'they declare they wou'd not proceed any farther in my Tryal p. 156. But if we may depend on this Author, all this might be without the Synod's regarding me as a Criminal, or my standing accused, or being under Process. And it is but fit to do him that Justice, to own that he proves by a strong Reason, that contrary to these Appearances, and usual Solemnities, and the express owning of a Tryal, there was no such thing as the Synod's regarding me as a Criminal; or my standing accused before them: Because forsooth my Name was call'd in the Roll. Now to see into the Depth and Justness of this wise Argument; the Rise of the Complaint and the Cry of the Party must be a little attended to. For the first Complaintant in his own serious Strain declar'd he had no

Freedom

Freedom to sit in Synod with me, and such as supported this *Motion*, strongly pleaded that I might be treated as one *infected with the Plague of Heresy*, and without further Proof be depriv'd of my Priviledge as a *Member of this Synod*. This was the great thing the *Party* struggled for, and to justify the inflicting such a *Censure*, they were at the Pains of forming a *Libel*, and going thro' several *Articles* in it. Now this *Author's* Argument stands thus, a *Party* took Offence at my *Print*, and had not *Freedom to sit in Synod with me*; in order therefore to try if there was any real Ground for such Offence, and their refusing to sit in *Synod with me*, several Members were appointed to receive and draw up the *Grounds of Offence*, which were accordingly laid before the *Synod*, and the first five *Articles* examin'd and consider'd, during which time, while the *Synod* was enquiring whether there were any Grounds to suspend me from my Right of sitting as a *Member of the Synod*, my Name was continued in the *Roll*, and therefore the *Synod* did not regard me as a *Criminal* nor stand accused: Which is just as solid a *Defence* of the *Synod*, as if he had undertaken to prove, I did not stand accused before the *Synod*, because they did not first inflict the *premeditated Censure*, and afterwards, try whether I deserved it or no. But so grossly foolish is this way of Arguing, that it proceeds upon an utter Ignorance both of the Rules and Practice of what this *Author* calls their *Constitution*. For a Minister is not suspended upon his standing accus'd, and being regarded as a *Criminal*, so far as to come under tryal. In some Cases upon apparently gross Presumptions of heinous Scandal, some have been suspended as soon as the *Libel* was form'd; but whether this be in any Circumstances just or no, is nothing to the present

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Purpose.

Purpose. When there can be famous Instance given, where Ministers *Names* were continued in the *Roll*, during the Time of their *tryal*, for Crimes that deserved as high a Censure as *Heresy* itself, and wou'd it not be ridiculous to infer from this they did not *stand accused*, nor their Presbyteries regard them as *Criminals*, when they had them under *Process*, & were afterwards found really guilty? What sort therefore this Man's *Light of Nature* must be of, when what is so consonant to the plainest Rules of Justice, and supported by such numerous Precedents, is so openly declared *contrary* to it, let all impartial Persons judge. One would think that he regarded himself as the Standard of Human Nature, when he so roundly pronounced of Understanding and Judgement in general, that it is *vitiating*, and *naturally under a Cloud*. For it is too evident that his *Light of Nature*, whatever the Cause of it, must be strangely over-clouded when he cou'd argue in this Manner: But the Advantage I clearly gain by his reasoning, bad as it is, that if I did really *stand accus'd*, and the Synod regarded me as a *Criminal* at the Time, it was manifestly unjust in them to require me to make a *Declaration*; for otherwise, why is he at so much pains to pass it on the World, that I was not in these Circumstances? And let it even rest here, any can read my *Tryal* and this *Review* of it, and be convinced even by this *Author's* new and peculiar Argument, that the Synod did not regard me as a *Criminal*, and that I did not *stand accused* before them, such may acquit the Synod and look on me as not knowing when I was under *Process* and *Trial*, but if they discover sufficient Evidence that I stood at their Bar for many Days together, as a *Criminal*, they must regard the Synod, i. e. the Party, as doing

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formal INQUISITORS, and me as an injured, persecuted Man, and if this Point be not so clear, as to force the Assent of any, I despair of ever satisfying them, that his *few Thoughts* are not a good *Defence of the Synod*, and must content myself with saying, there is no *convincing a Man against his Will*.

BUT if the Strength of his Argument turn on this, 'that they did not regard *him* as a Criminal, charg'd with so heavy a Guilt as denying the Lord that bought *him*.' This is a new Specimen of the *delusive* Power of Zeal. For is it not surprising, that this busy Member of the Committee, thou'd not see that this is expressly charg'd on me in their *Grounds of Offence*. For in their first *Observation*, after they set down the *Affidavit*, they pronounce the Words sworn to be positively said by me, highly dishonourable to our great Redeemer. In their 2d, they call it an *Evasion*, that I only said it was no Blasphemy in the Jews to deny Christ to be God, and that since it was sworn that I express'd it indefinitely and universally, consequently it is no Blasphemy in any Person to deny Christ to be God. And in their 3d, that the repeated Assertion is delivered in my Letter in such universal Terms, as does not admit of the Restriction there mentioned by me, so that if it was no Blasphemy in the Jews, consequently not that kind of Blasphemy condemned in Scripture. Which in other words, is saying, that it is no Injury or Reproach to the Name of Christ, to deny him to be God; which cou'd not in any Reason be said, but by one that denied him to be God himself, which without all peradventure, is in this Author's Sense denying the Lord that bought him; and yet all these Observations are in so many Words call'd by the Synod, Articles of the Charge brought against me: It is therefore false in Fact, that I was not charg'd with so heavy Guilt; if the Libel, or the Minutes of the Synod be

good Evidence of what I was charg'd with. So often is this unhappy *Writer* found by all hands, offering Violence to Truths, not depending on Strength of Memory, but inserted into the *publick Records of the Synod*. But it is more inexcusable to do so, when the Temptation lies the other way; for what he had so much at heart, was to vindicate the *Synod* in the Demand of a *Declaration of Christ's Supreme Deity*, and that upon the *Motives of God's Glory, their Edification, and for my own sake*. Now if I was not charg'd with the heavy Guilt of denying it, how wou'd my submitting to a *Declaration of it*, tend to *Gods Glory, or their Edification*? Might they not as well have urged these Motives for my *declaring*, on any other Point? Might they not have been offer'd to any other Member of the *Synod* as well as me? And why was I singled out, if I was not charged more than any other? And pray cou'd it do any Service to my *Reputation*, that in this *Author's Account* was not sullied with the *Charge of such heavy Guilt*? Wou'd he have the World believe the *Synod* made all this Bustle, when there was no *Accusation*, nor the Man they squeez'd at such an unmerciful rate regarded as a *Criminal*? Is not this to suppose they fell on me without any Ground or Occasion? Nay is not this in Effect to own, that all the mighty Struggle was not about *Orthodoxy*? For upon that Head it seems they had no Charge against me, but about a new *Claim of Power*, even to oblige a Man to *purge himself*, when there was no Charge against him? Wou'd it not be more for the Honour of the *Synod*, and sound better with the World, to have vamp'd up all the Suspicions and Jealousies which cou'd have been gather'd out of the *Affidavit, the offensive Letter*, and their *imaginary Consequences*, and have pleaded upon their united Strength that it was necessary to repair the Injury done to

the Honour of Christ, to remove the Offence given to my zealous Brethren, and heal the Breach that was made in my own Reputation wide as the Sea, by purging myself of an Error, of which I was suspected and accused? This is the very Truth of the Case; but the Misfortune is, it wou'd have appear'd too plainly an **INQUISITION** in that Light, and therefore as that was like to be a *Milstone* hung about the Neck of the Party, the last Shift was, in spite of the plain Words of the *Libel*, and the *Minutes*, to make the World believe my Head was turn'd, and that I fancy'd myself *accused*, tired to Death almost by drawing up a long Defence, and standing six long Days in Judgement before them, when there was nothing in it; and in reality I neither stood accused, nor was regarded as a Criminal by the Synod, let me pretend what I will. And all that is left for me, is to appeal to the World, and especially to those who attended this tedious Tryal, if I was not awake and in my Senses, and if they as well as myself did not alledge I stood accused, and was regarded as a Criminal by the Synod, charg'd with such heavy Guilt, as to maintain it was no Reproach in any to say Christ was not God. And I shall leave it in Judgement, whether this Writer had reason to soften the Matter, as if I had *disqualified myself by acting an unsocial Part*, as he calls it, and that I wou'd not open my Mouth to glorify my Redeemer, when the part he and his Brethren wou'd have me acted, was to betray the Rights of Society, and the express Authority of Christ, if it once appear that I was under Process before them. But it is pleasant to observe what he owns, on each Hand of his denying me to stand accused, that my giving the Declaration of Christ's supreme Deity, wou'd have edified my offended Brethren. Pray what offended them? Was it not an

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Apprehension that I had uttered Words *dishonourable* to Christ? Was not this hoisted into an *Article* of the Charge against me? And yet these *offended Brethren* cou'd be *edified* by a *Members* declaring himself on a *Particular*, for which they had never brought any Charge against him, if we may believe this *Author*. So that in his way of thinking, an *Offence* may be justly taken up, and a *Member* brought under *Censure*, where there is no *Process*, nor *Ground of Accusation*, and such as have taken up in this manner may be *edified* by a *Man's* clearing himself of what he was never *accused*. A new *Method of Tryal and Issue*! Some *Members* took *Offence*, and wou'd not sit in *Synod with me*, and therefore had a severe and artful *Libel* form'd, and all their *Resentment* wou'd have been hush'd at once if I wou'd satisfy them I was free of a *heinous Crime* they never *charged* me with. And if he does not thus make his *Brethren* wise *Judges*, or himself a wise *Author*, let the *Impartial* judge.

AND thus he has display'd his rare *Talent* in taking *Defence* for his abused *Brethren*; but to fix it deeper in the *Reader's* *Mind*, like an *Author* of great *Address* and *Skill*, he touches most of the *Particulars* over again, and places them in a new and bolder *Light*. But here is brought to one View the full *Extent* of the *Mock-omnipotence* of *several* *Zeal*; for now it begins to act, as if to be and not to be, were perfectly at it's *Command*. Otherwise how cou'd he appeal to the '*unbiass'd* *Reader*, '*they deserve to be accus'd as treating me as barbarous*, '*as I wou'd have been us'd in Spain or Italy by the* '*quisition,*' when there was very sufficient Cause taken to prevent any such *Apprehension*, by what I said, p. 10. of the *Dedication*. '*Let none pretend* that I insinuate, that the *Party* have set up

an *Inquisition*, as they have in some *Popish* Countries. Nor do I charge them with all the Instances of **CRUELTY** that the *Papists* are guilty of. But because a great part of my Complaint turns on this, that the *Party* by the like Proceedings did all they cou'd to crush one, who wou'd not by an open Submission recognize that Power in their Hands, I shall to prevent any Wrangling about the Name of a thing, here lay down the Notion of it clearly. There are two ways of proceeding against Persons under an Accusation and Process. The one is, when the Offences a Person is charged with, are proved upon him by Witnesses, which is the only just way, and that which is prescribed in the Word of God, and ought to have been taken in my Case: The other is, when **NO** *Witnesses* appear, or can so much as be pretended against a Person; but he is required by the *Dint of Authority to purge himself*, if innocent, or accuse himself, if guilty, and his refusing to do so, shall be either taken for a Confession of Guilt, or made the Ground of punishing him for disobeying their Injunction. This Latter which is **NOT** by Proof, but by Inquiry of the Person accused, or suspected, every one has agreed to call an *Inquisition*; and properly enough I presume; and this Course the *Party* took with me. Where I have acquitted them in the plainest manner, of the *Barbarity* used in *popish* Countries: But all this by the *Legerdemain of Zeal* must pass for nothing. And because I charge them with the *Essence and Formality* of an *Inquisition*, I must accuse them of treating me as *barbarously*, as I wou'd have been used in *Spain* or *Italy*. And this I must have the Impudence to do, tho' there was not a Hair of my Head touched; but in
either

either of these Places, thou'd have pay'd for my
 Stupidness with my Life. But I can tell this *Author*,
 however angry he is at his own imaginary
 Imputation, it is a great Mercy to me that some
 Men's Hands are bound up, for if their own Words
 may be taken for it, they wou'd with Pleasure have
 made a Sacrifice of me to the Honor and Authority
 of the *Synod*.

THERE is indeed less Ground to complain of
 this pious Fraud, when the annihilating Power of his
 Zeal is such, that the very Resentment of the Party
 must give way to it, and by the Slight of his Hand
 pass and be gone. For tho' he had in the very
 Paragraph next before declared, the *Synod* could
 not but RESENT such ill Usage, and that they
 not carry their RESENTMENT high, yet here, the
 judicious Part of Mankind are summoned to judge
 whether they are not in reality good natured in NOT
 RESENTING such Calumny published to the World
 by him. And so what they cou'd not but resent
 they did not resent. And what can stand before the
 Force of this *Hocus-pocus*-way of writing, when the
 RESENTMENT of the Party shall thus come
 and go, just as the Fancy takes him? And
 Wonder in good earnest, when the dark Hint which
 he pretends to have quoted from the 3d p. of my
 Letter to Mr. Smith, is not to be found there, nor
 quoted by himself, unless his Words must pass for
 mine, nor was ever so much as taken Notice of
 by the Party, till this Author, who sees so well
 the dark, spied it out for them. And the whole
 of their good Nature then is, they did not resent
 Calumny they knew nothing of, and were ready
 to forgive all the ill Language against themselves, in which
 they were no way concerned, and was never uttered
 ed, till this advent'rous Writer offer'd his

Thought

Thoughts, in their Defence. Nor will their good Nature appear so extraordinary, as he wou'd represent it, till he show, there was not enough in all reason said in the *Extemporary Defence*, and *written Answer*, to satisfy every one there was nothing in the *Proposition*, as delivered and meant by me, that was in the least *unguarded*, with respect to our *Saviour's DEITY*, if they are not more guided by *Resentment* than *Knowledge*. And when his Hand is in, he wou'd greatly consult the Honour of the *Party*, if he can shew any manner of *Handle*, either from the *Affidavit* or my *Print*, they had to insist upon a *Declaration* of *Christ's supreme Deity*, and that there was any thing more in it, than that they knew making a *Declaration in such Circumstances*, was a point wherein I cou'd be pinch'd, and therefore fit to be laid hold on as the most plausible Ground to exclude me on. And till he do this in a fair rational way, we must believe the *Committee*, who in their *Libel* make no Bones to avow their *Resentment*, and the open *Declaration* of this *Author*, that they cou'd not but *resent such ill Usage*, and demur to this Plea for their being *in reality good natur'd*, when in sight of all his Art and juggling their *Resentment* appears great and real, and their *good Nature* a meer Shadow and Delusion.

BUT still the greatest Stretch of his Cunning is yet behind, when he wou'd make his *unbiass'd Readers* believe, that the *Declaration* might have been *voluntary* on my part. There is no Occasion to be very profuse of that deep Learning, which the Point of *Liberty* has afforded to the World. For whatever the strict and formal Notion of it be, it is generally agreed, that where a Man does not act from a Conviction of the reasonableness and Goodness of the Action it self, and is only moved

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by *Worldly Hopes and Fears*, to do what otherwise he wou'd choose to forbear, that cannot be justly call'd a *voluntary Action*, so as to be *virtuous* and good. But now from the first starting of this Matter, I heard of little else but loud Threatnings, *not to sit any longer in Synod with me*, if I wou'd not contrary to the Light of my *Conscience*, and a solemn *Protestation* published to the World against all *inquisitory Methods*, make the *Declaration* the Party insisted on. And is not this a rare way of doing a Thing *voluntarily*? when it appear'd directly sinful, and the Party were put to utter Silence, about the Justice and reasonableness of their Demand, and when Answers were required to the Arguments offer'd against it, no Reply at last was made, *but they wou'd do that by a Vote*. Such was the Nature of this *voluntary Declaration* I was to make: *Con- viction* I must not wait for; but be influenc'd by the awful Rod of their *Authority*, and the *Fury* and *Calumny* of their Friends without Doors, that wou'd be ready to be cast in, to fill up the Measure of the *Synod's Resentment*, if I did not pay such a *Com- plement* to the *new Claim of Power*, which the mighty Guardians of *Orthodoxy* cou'd not think themselves safe without. But as with this *Power* nothing will pass for *Persecution*, but the Discipline of personal and worldly Damage, so perhaps with them every Action is *voluntary* that is not extorted by corporal Pains and Penalties. But they should consider, that tho' *free Will*, as a learned *Author* mentioned before, observes, be like a *Virgin*, which cannot be ravished, yet like her, it may be tempted and overcome by other means, than open Violence and Force. And among these, I may justly reckon the Terrors of their proper *Authority*, which he owned they were ready to exert.

WHEN this Author declares what their *proper Authority* is, if it be over Men's Consciences, and the *Laws of Christ*, we shall then be able to judge, how justly it is founded upon what he drops in as the Reason or Soul of their *proper Authority*, that at my Ordination I had solemnly profess'd Subjection to my Brethren in the Lord'. In the Lord, one wou'd think cou'd never be meant against his established Laws and Rules of Discipline. But so it is, if they had any *proper Authority* over me in that Case, by vertue of my professing Subjection to them in the Lord, it must directly amount to counteracting the Lord's Direction not to receive an Accusation against an Elder, but before two or three Witnesses, 1 Tim. 5. 19. But supposing for once the Party were not guilty of setting aside that Maxim of natural Equity, was it the Part of Protestant Dissenters to require one of their Members to submit to their Authority, while he scrupled the Lawfulness of their Decision? And wou'd not this confirm all the hard things which have been said of Presbyterian Tyranny, when the Plea of Conscience will not be allow'd? But he that wou'd be Presbyterian of the right Stamp, now a Days must imitate that worthy Person, who upon his transportation declared, tho' it was against his Conscience to leave his People, yet as he was a Presbyterian, he wou'd submit to the Determination of his Brethren; this was relish'd as a just Complement to their Authority. But however his Conscience was not then Proof against it, something else has got the better of it, and to their Face he has complain'd of Faction and Tyranny among them. And so it has happen'd upon many other Occasions, that the very Men, who wou'd bind others Hand and Foot by that Ordination Vow, have upon much smaller Pretences than the Plea of Conscience, made

light of *Synodical Orders and Rules*. And so it is with them, as with some Civil Governors, they make *Laws*, not for *themselves* to observe, but as *Engines* to keep others in Subjection to them.

* BUT I must hasten to examine the *parallel Case* he states in the following Paragraph from a *Civil Court*. I acknowledge a *Parallel* in this Sense, has a just Claim to the same Indulgence, that is generally shown to an ordinary *Simile*; for tho' a critical Eye may discover some little *Halt* in the Length it goes, this is thought no great Fault or Blemish. But when it is downright *lame*, and has not a Foot to stand on, it is regarded only as an Impertinence, and to use such, a certain Sign of Want of Judgment. An eminent *Doctor* has been severely laugh'd at for making *parallel Lines meet in a Center*. But this true Disciple of his in the Doctrine of *wholesome Severities*, has done much worse for his *Parallels* do not only meet, but often run cross and a thwart one another. And so they do in their first setting out. For the *Parliament* and *Synod* are no more like one another in their *Authority* and Claim of Power, than the Master of a Family, and a Servant entrusted with the Execution of certain Orders, during his Master's Absence. The Master himself may indeed make what Regulations

* I shall state a *Parallel Case* from a *Civil Court*. I suppose the *Parliament*, and called together in the Name of our Sovereign Lord the King, and that a Member of either House, should during the *Session* print a Letter, having these Words in it, *is no Treason in a Jacobite to say, That King George is not lawful and rightful Sovereign of these Realms, and if the Jacobites say so, they ought not be suppress'd by the Civil Magistrate*. I have good reason to believe, the House would be offended

regulations he thinks proper, and change them again at his Pleasure. But the Servant is strictly bound up to his Instructions, and cannot, without laying himself open to a *Charge* of Injustice or unfaithfulness, depart from or let them aside. The Parliament, as we have seen in some Instances, don't think themselves tied up to all the Formalites, to which inferior Courts are bound; but claim a Power paramount to these in extraordinary Cases, and proceed against subtile *Traitors*, who are meditating an entire Subversion of our Rights and Liberties, not according to the strict Rules of the *Association*, but the full *Extent* of Power, which Men have an undoubted Claim to use for their own Defence in the *State of Nature*, to prevent and guard against ill Appearances, and under-hand Designs. But a *Synod of Divines*, who dare not claim the least Degree of *Legislative Power*, can never claim the Precedent of such an Assembly: And nothing but an *Imagination* over-heated by Zeal, or fancy, that they or their Proceedings can be parallel in any Degree.

BUT again, his *Parallel* is miserably defective in the Part he has drawn of it, for he shou'd have suppos'd, that the *Member* had in the Letter, fully recogniz'd his *Majesties* Title, and given the strongest Assurances of his own firm and steady Allegiance

such a Letter, and they would immediately call upon the Author to take the Oaths, which if he refus'd to take, they would expel him the House, and probably go a greater Length, but I am sure such a Sentence would be a merciful one. To apply this, I beg Leave to assure the *Protestors*, and Mr. *Nevin's* *Advocates*, the Honour of King JESUS is, and ought to be dearer to a *Church Judicature*, as the Honour of King GEORGE, our lawful Sovereign, is to his *British* Subjects.

ance to him ; for so I had evidently done, in the Letter I had printed, not as he stretches the *parallel*, during the sitting, but before the meeting of the *Synod*, in the Case of our *Saviour's DEITY*, when I had pronounc'd of the *Jews and all others*, who denied him to be *GOD*, that they thought *MEANLY and WICKEDLY* of our Lord in this Point.

AND once more his *Parallel* warps strangely from my Case both with Respect to the Circumstances of the Person, and the Nature of the Crime he fixes on. A *Jacobite* with respect to his *Majesties* Title, and a *Jew* in regard of his denying *Christ to be God*, do most widely differ, as to their Liability to be punish'd for their respective Principles and Errors. For the *Jacobite* is his *Majesty's* Subject, oblig'd by the Laws to swear Allegiance to him. And his Principle evidently tends to the Confusion of the State. But a *Jew* violates no Law of *Civil Society*, nor any way injures the Peace and Safety of the Public, by denying *Christ to be God*. And his *Parallel* with respect to the Persons is so exact, that the one may be suppress'd as an avowed Enemy to the State, and the other treated in the same Manner, tho' he may be a very peaceable and good Subject. But still the crookedest Part of his *Parallel* is yet behind, if we examine into the Nature of the Crime, which he fixes on. *Treason* immediately affects the State, and depends absolutely upon the Laws of the Constitution, and what is or is not *Treason* is particularly determin'd by them, and beyond Exception, comes justly within their Sphere. But *Blasphemy* does not take it's Rise and Being from the Laws of *Civil Society* ; several Kinds of it have no Manner of Influence directly, on the Peace and Welfare thereof, and therefore cannot justly

within the Sphere of human Laws. So Streight and perfect then is his *Parallel*, that a *Civil Crime* and *speculative Error*, no way affecting the State, are so like and *Parallel* one to the other, that as a *Member of Parliament* might be taken to task for saying, the one ought not to be suppress'd by the *Civil Magistrate*, so a *Member of an Ecclesiastical Assembly* might be justly excluded for asserting the other, is not to be suppress'd by the *Civil Magistrate*. And if we be not very dextrous at forming *Parallels*, may be left to the Judgement of any, who knows the Difference between a *streight* and *crooked Line*. For it is plain, that as denying Christ to be God, can only be judged *Heresy* in a Point of *pure Revelation*, so in all reason it can only be cognizable by an *Au-*
thority that flows from the same *Original*, & that must only be the *Church*, whose Power extends only to her own Members, and consequently not to the *Infidel Jews*, 1 Cor. 5. ult. which is all that I maintain'd, that this was not a *Crime to be punish'd by the Magistrate*. And therefore to make the Case *parallel* to mine, a *Member of Parliament* shou'd only be supposed to say, that tho' a *Jacobite* said, that *King George* is not lawful and rightful Sovereign of these Realms, yet he ought not to be prosecuted in the *Spiritual Court*. And he may try, if he has any good Reason to believe, the *House* wou'd be offended at him for such a Principle, and unless he can produce it, his *Parallel*, will be no great Defence of the *Synod's Honor*: For otherwise it will not come up to their Case at all.

THERE are some things a Man of ordinary Prudence wou'd be very nice & tender about, especially when he is very far from a clear and distinct Understanding of them. If this *Author* then has used this necessary Caution, when he so frankly pronounces, or rather

rather prescribes, what Measures the august House of Parliament ought to take in certain Cases, shall for me be referr'd to his wiser Friends. But surely if he had allow'd himself to consider that I had observed to his hand, p. 8. ' *that I might be bold* ' *in saying, that it was not that Sort or Degree of Blasphemy in the Jews to deny Christ to be God, which* ' *justly comes within the Sphere of human Laws, where* ' *the Wisdom of the British Nation has seen fit to alter* ' *the Form of an Oath in their Favor, that they may be* ' *qualified to be Subjects of that Kingdom,*' he might be less forward to draw a Parallel from a civil Court, as he seems in his profound Skill to call either House, to show the Synod had a Right to censure me for the only Principles upon which that very wise and good Act of the British Parliament can be justified, and for preaching which, the late honorable House of Commons of this Kingdom at the last Session, gave Thanks to the incomparable Mr. Syng.

BUT however free a Divine of such Note may be with his Superiors, I am sensible it becomes one charged with mighty Crimes to write with greater Modesty and Reserve. And therefore I have declined giving Judgment, whether a Member might not safely maintain all, that this wise Auditor says he has good Reason to believe the House would not be offended at in one of their Members. For such is the Mercy of our wise Administration, that I have often heard that by a late Act, no Words are Treason by the Law, if the King's Life is not threatned to be taken away, or in some few other Instances, which whether the above Words amount to or not, I am not a Lawyer enough to determine. But if it should happen that it were not Treason, or at least not high Treason, to say all that a Jacobite is supposed to

es, this finishes his *Parallel* most compleately, and makes him the ablest *Defender* the *Synod* cou'd ever hope for ; one who will stop at nothing, but with- out Knowledge, will say all for them that comes in his Head.

AND of this he has given a most notable Proof, when ' to apply this, he begs Leave to assure the Pro- fessors, and Mr. N---s Advocates, the Honour of King JESUS is, and ought to be as dear to a Church Ju- dicature, as the Honour of King George is to his Bri- tish Subjects.' And now take the Case as he has made the *Parallel*, if either *House* shou'd be as wise as he wou'd have them, and call upon a *Member* in the Case he supposes, to take the Oaths, and on his Refusal expel him, or go a greater Length ; which when he produces his good Reason, we may believe he does. If the Words are really *Treason*, and the *Member* was mistaken in that Point of Law, which is as excusable surely, as for the acting Ma- jority of a *Synod* to be out in a plain Point of the Gospel, and he was thereupon required to take the Oaths, however it might be without Precedent, yet in Deference to that august Assembly, we must suppose he cou'd not plead it was against a Funda- mental of the Constitution, and contrary to the Principles of natural Equity ; and it is certain, the Words suppos'd to be uttered by a *Jacobite*, let them amount to *Treason* or no, are contrary to his Majesty's Crown and Dignity. But now by the Confession of the Party, the Words spoken by me, shou'd not be censur'd, as seeming to sound harsh in pious ears, are in themselves a great and glorious Truth, and so far from being dishonourable to, that they are the greatest Honor to King Jesus, as he came not to destroy but to seek Men's Lives ; and is it not rarely said, that a Church Judicature ought to be as
I zealous

zealous in expelling a Member, for what tends to the Honour of their glorious Head and Founder, and because he wou'd not break thro' one of the established Laws of his Kingdom, as *British Subjects* are when they expel a Man, for asserting that to be no *Treason* that is declared by the *Law* to be so, and is really a *sensible Dishonour* to their truly excellent *Monarch*, and for his not complying with what is required of every Subject, by the *Laws* of the *Land*. And thus the *Synod* are in the Right to punish a Man for speaking *Truth*, and standing by the *Law* of the Kingdom of *Christ*; because the *Parliament* may punish one for being mistaken, and refusing Obedience to their *Laws*. But after all, I must not forget to observe, that as the Case he puts is decidedly fictitious, so the good *Reason* he pretends to have for believing the *Oaths* wou'd be tender'd upon it, is no other than a strong Impulse of his *Zeal*. For there can be no Instance given, where any Member of *Parliament* was served in this manner, and the *Oaths* put to him a *second time*, upon any Misdemeanour, or Suspicion of Disloyalty. And 'tis great odds, if that *honourable Body* wou'd not think it a high Reflection on their Wisdom, to have any such thing supposed of them. But be that as it will, he have shown his *Parallel* is nothing but the rambling of an ungovern'd Fancy, and quite foreign to the Case with the *Synod*.

* HE comes next to give the finishing Stroke to his *Defence of the Synod's Method with me*, by suggesting

• BEFORE I finish my *Defence of the SYNOD's Method* with Mr. *Nevin*, I shall suggest a few Thoughts on the sacred Story of *LORD's* putting the Question three times to *Peter*, (*lovest thou me?*) which *Peter* answer'd, as often as the Question was put to him, *John* xxi. 15, 16. Where observe,

new Thoughts on the sacred Story of our Lord's putting the Question three times to Peter, &c. John xxi. 15, 16.
 Before I enter upon this new Sett of *few Thoughts*, it may be advisable, considering what a *grave Generation* I have to do with, and how fond they are to represent me as *treating important Subjects without that Seriousness and Gravity that becomes a Gospel Minister*, to cut off all Handle of this Kind, by putting 'em in mind, that if I treat what is really sacred in that Story, with a becoming Deference and Reverend, I may well be allow'd to treat with all the Force and Edge of *Ridicule*, such of his *few Thoughts* as are evidently suggested by a feverish intemperate Zeal, and have no manner of Existence any where but in his own Imagination, and the surprizing Draught he has given us of it's *Workings* on this Subject. Tho' after all I may please them so far, as to be somewhat *graver* than usual on this Occasion, even at the Hazard of being thought here dull and formal.

* But I appeal to the *gravest* of them all, if there be not a great Temptation laid my way at his first setting out, when from that forecited Text, he calls upon us to *observe* what there is not the least Hint or Intimation of in that Passage of holy Writ. It is indeed true in Fact, that *Peter gave Offence in denying his Master, and wept bitterly for it*, but how we can observe it, where there is nothing of it to be found, is a Secret never to be found by any, but such

* *First*, The Apostle had given Offence, in denying his Master, and had removed the Offence, in the Sight of God, by his bitter weeping and sincere Repentance, before the Questions under our Eye in the sacred Texts were ask'd, consequently he was innocent, and receiv'd into Communion with God, even when this *Inquisition* (as some delight to call this method of conversing) was held upon him.

such as have learned the *Mystery* of seeing in the Scriptures whatever they please. But tho' I am strangely apprehensive, this manner of treating the sacred Oracles, has drawn upon them all the Contempt and Ridicule they have often met with, I shall only beg of this *Author* and his *Party*, to be a little more sparing in letting the World see, that according to them these inspired Volumes are never to be understood or interpreted as other Books are usually done. While I must observe in my Turn, that he not only puts upon the *Text*, matters there is not the least Mention of, but surprizing *Solecisms*, to say no worse, of what he wou'd have us further observe, that *Peter* had removed his Offence in the Sight of God, by his bitter weeping, and consequently was innocent. This is a way of expressing I dare say peculiar to this *Author*, for Offence when 'tis of the same Import with Scandal or Stumbling-block, only respects our Fellow-Christians, and repenting, or even, in our modern *Ecclesiastic* Stile, giving Satisfaction for an Offence, can in no Consistency with the Propriety of Language, or with Truth, be said to make an Offender innocent. So great is the Misfortune of *Party-writers*, that while they would press the Scriptures to their Service, that they make them most unmercifully, and set them at Variance with the plainest Truths, and even some times with such as they wou'd be thought to defend. Of which we have a glaring Instance, in his second Observation.

* What he says of our Lord's not asking these Questions

* 2dly, OUR LORD did not ask these Questions for his own Information, for he needed not that any should testify to him of Man for he knew what was in Man, John ii 25. Nor does he act as GOD in this matter, but as MEDIATOR, and Head of his Church.

tions for his own Information is past all Dispute, & the Reason he advances from this same *Evangelist's* Words in another place, is most evident and convincing, but he miserably strains, nay contradicts the *Passage under his Eye*, when he adds, *nor does he act as God in this Matter, but as Mediator and Head of the Church*. Now if this be not writing unguardedly, I won't say in the loose way of this *Author's* expressing himself, of the *Doctrine of the Trinity*, but of the *Deity* of our blessed Lord, I shall leave to the judicious *Elders* themselves. If they will but attend to these two Things. 1 That the *Apostle* in the *17 v.* ascribes absolute *Omniscience* or unlimited Knowledge of all things, and the direct *Intuition* or Knowledge of his *Heart* to him, on this very Occasion; *Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*; and the Reason this *Author* gives for his Observation, plainly amounts to the same, for *he knew what was in Man*: And yet after this, to pronounce in such a peremptory way, *nor does he act as GOD in this Matter*, betrays such Ignorance and Weakness, as must strike every one of the least Reflection with a sensible Concern. What is the Argument for our Saviour's having Divine, Infinite Perfections founded on, his knowing the *Hearts* of Men to be given up at once in such a Manner? Can he have no need that any shou'd testify to him of Man; and yet not act as God in this Matter?

How

Church, he is now sending out his Disciples, to teach and rule his Church when he was to *ascend on high*, and to be no more personally with them in the World: He here leaves them an Example, which we would think a Christian *Judicature* may imitate, yea, ought to follow, in enquiring one of another, the Sincerity of their Faith, or Love. I apprehend, a Conformity to *Christ's* Example should not be infamously represented.

How pleasing will it be to the *Arians*, to observe this great Stickler for *Orthodoxy*, asserting this Knowledge may be exercised by him, and *not as GOD*, and consequently may be attributed to him, tho' no more than a most glorious super-eminent Creature? What Triumphs wou'd the learned Committee have made, if they cou'd have spied any such warping towards *Heresy* in my poor innocent Letter.

AND in the 2d place, is any thing more plain than that he roundly asserts, that wherever our *Lord acts as Mediator and Head of the Church*, he does *not act as GOD*, for he sets these in direct Opposition one another. Now this is not only contrary to the current Strain of *orthodox* Writers, but saps most of their Arguments for our Saviour's Divinity, especially such as they draw from those parts of his *Mediation*, which cou'd be perform'd by no other than a *divine* Intelligence, endued with *infinite* Power, and a thorough *perfect* Inspection of all things. And is it not demolishing all these Arguments, to suppose it as a Point clear and plain, that our *Lord does not act as GOD*, when he acts as *Mediator and Head of the Church*? Will it be any Relief to *Orthodoxy* mangled at such a Rate, tho' when it sneering Adversaries may say, *what are these wounds in thine hands*, it can answer as the false Prophet, *these with which I was wounded in the House of my Friends*? Is the flaming Zeal of some so blind, that such dangerous Opinions so openly vented, shall escape all Observation and Censure? Or is it only prudent to overlook the Mistakes of so good a Well-wisher to the Cause, and let his other Services atone for these *rash* and *unguarded* Assertions? Or have they any lucky Distinction to reconcile what he advances on this Head, to what is called the

Analogy

Analogy of Faith, and the Principles of *Catholic Orthodoxy*? Or must we believe the Man meant very honestly, but that these *officious Errors* unawares crept into the Mouth of his Pen? Hard Fate! when some must be branded as *Hereticks* for understanding, and being able to defend the great *Mysteries* of Faith, when others may utter and publish with Safety, the grossest and most ignorant *Blunders* about them.

BUT perhaps with some the truest excuse will be, that his representing the Case in this Manner, serves the good purpose of enlarging the *Power* of Christian Judicatures. But they will find themselves sadly out, when his Argument will appear founded on a dangerous, palpable Error, tho' all he said before had been perfectly right. For all his Reasoning turns on this single Point, that because our Lord 'acted as *Mediator and Head* of the Church, is now sending out his Disciples, to teach and rule his Church, he here leaves them an Example, which one won'd think a Christian Judicature may imitate, yea ought to follow &c.' Now is it not rare Doctrine out of the Mouth of a Protestant Dissenter, that whatever Christ acted as *Mediator and Head* of the Church, when he was sending out his Disciples, he therein left 'em an Example, which a Christian Judicature may and ought to follow. And by this Rule a Christian Judicature may institute *Sacraments*, for then it was he commanded his Disciples to baptize all Nations; and employ their Missionaries to preach whatever they command them, for so our Lord on this Occasion, instructed and authoriz'd his Disciples. And herein it is certain that he acted as *Mediator and Head of the Church*, tho' I won't say with this Author, he did not act as God.

BUT

BUT still 'tis worth observing further, how he stretches the *Example* beyond any thing, which is contain'd in the Truth of the Fact. For if our Lord enquires into Peter's Love, with this *Writer* a *Christian Judicature* may and ought to enquire one of another, the Sincerity of their Faith or Love. And thus Faith and Love must be brought into the Church's Enquiry; because our Lord as *Mediator* thought fit to enquire into the Love of one of his Disciples. But sure if in this Christ *left us an Example*, which we may and ought to follow, there can be no longer any Doubt made. If the strict *Independents* were in the right, to insist upon evident Signs of men's new Birth and Conversion, as the only Foundation of Church Communion. For sure the Sincerity of Love amounts to no less; And if this be an *Example* for our Imitation, it will fully justify their Scheme of Church Membership, tho' a *Judicial* Enquiry into a Man's Faith, when he stands in Judgment can't receive the least Countenance from it. I can tell him, where a pretended Conformity to Christ's *Example* acting as *Mediator and Head of the Church*, is represented no less than Blasphemous; And it is plainly infamous under the pretence of his *Example* to invade his Prerogative, and counteract his establish'd Laws. And whether this be the Case of the *Author* and his Party in more Instances than mine, is in Judgement with the World. If he had hit upon an *Example* that was any way parallel to mine, he must make out their Right to imitate and follow it, by some other Argument than his acting as *Mediator and Head of the Church*. For in many Cases that will be a good unanswerable Reason why none may or ought to follow it.

HIS 3d Observation is by way of *Inference*, and which he says is *rational*; we have found his *Light*

of Nature on a former Appeal he makes to it, to be the Reverse of every Man's else ; and it is great odds but what with him passes for *rational*, is all over Chimerical and absurd ; as will appear by taking it in Pieces, and observing the several strange Mistakes and groundless Suppositions he has heap'd together in this his *rational Inference*. And

1 His taking upon him to determine and limit the Design of our Lord in proposing the same Question three times, is not very *rational* ; when the View he fixes for him, seems not very reconcilable either to Truth or Prudence. For what Reason can there be to suppose that this was done *fully to satisfy the Disciples*, or that they had taken Offence at Peter ? This was now the *third time* that Jesus shewed himself to his Disciples, after that he was risen from the Dead ; and it appears certain of Matter of Fact, that Peter was all along in the Society of his Brethren ; and there is not the least Hint that ever they scrupled *Communion* with him, or needed to be more *fully satisfied*, than they were already. It is probable they had heard, how *bitterly he wept* for denying his Lord ; he shew'd himself as zealous as any of them, to discover the Certainty of Christ's being risen again, and had a particular Vision of him, before he appear'd to the *Disciples* in general, when he was also present. What imaginable Ground can there then be, to suppose that Men who were conscious to their own Cowardice, and more nearly deserting of their Lord, shou'd be so scrupulous as to want *fuller Satisfaction* in Peter's Case, and keep up their Offence against him, after they had for some time join'd and continued in *Communion* with him ? So that if we may judge of the *Disciples* Sentiments by their Practice ; it can no way

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consist with the Truth of the Fact as it appears to us ; But this is yet more remarkably so in his allerting these *Questions* to be propos'd, *fully* to satisfy other Christians besides the Disciples, who had also taken Offence at Peter. Now 'tis hard to find who these Christians were ; it is plain from v. 20 of this Chap. that none were with Peter, but SIX other Disciples, when our Lord propos'd and thrice repeated the same Question to him. But if it be pretended, that *absent* Christians might hear of the Affair, and so be *fully satisfied*. Yet it shou'd be remember'd, that to reconcile the Design he form'd for our blessed Lord, to his State of the Case, there must be such as had taken Offence at Peter ; and how he will make it appear there were any such must be left to his after Thought and Enquiry. And if he can't find out other Christians, besides the Disciples, who had also taken Offence, and whom our Lord design'd *fully* to satisfy, by holding the *Inquisition* (as this Author teaches us to call our Lord's proposing these Questions) upon Peter, his *rational Inference* will appear to be made without any Truth as the Ground and Foundation of it.

AND if we examine further into the Extent of the Design, he wou'd infer our Lord had in the *Method of conversing*, it will perhaps be as difficult to account for the *Prudence* of it, as the Truth of the Facts, when he roundly pronounces, ' that our Lord's Design was *fully* to satisfy the Disciples and other Christians, that thereby he might qualify Peter for feeding his Sheep and Lambs, which he cou'd not do to their Edification, until they were fully satisfied as to the Sincerity of his Faith and Love'. 1st, Then upon this Principle, how cou'd our Lord be justified in employing any to preach his Kingdom, whom he knew to be *insincere*, as he evidently did in the

case of *Judas*, or who had given *Offence* to their Brethren by their *Fear and Cowardice*, and yet had not obliged them by the like Method *fully to satisfy weak Christians*, who might be *offended* at them as well as at *Peter*? For according to this *Author* without this they cou'd not feed his *Sheep and Lambs* to their *Edification*. And is it consistent with *Prudence* to reflect upon his own former Conduct or new himself partial by insisting on that as a *Qualification* in one Disciple, which he did not require from others, who yet had given very just Occasion to have their *Sincerity* question'd as well as his. 2dly, Can it be thought adviseable to make that a necessary *Qualification for feeding Christ's Sheep to their Edification*, which neither his *Sheep nor Lambs*, are proper Judges of? For such they surely are not of the *Sincerity of their Faith and Love*, who yet may feed 'em to their *Edification*. Is this Design of our Lord then to be drawn into Precedent, and established as an invariable Rule to *qualify* any for *feeding his Sheep to their Edification*, that they must *fully satisfy all they hope to edify, of the Sincerity of their Faith and Love*? Is it becoming the Wisdom of the great Head of the Church, to lay down a Rule, that is utterly impracticable, and to set his Followers an Example, which will never answer the End? For so it is most evidently, if his Design was *fully to satisfy offended Christians, of the Sincerity of Peter's Faith and Love, as the only way to qualify him for feeding his Sheep to their Edification*, when 'tis plain beyond all Contradiction, that in no after Cases any cou'd be *qualified* in this manner, or by this Method, *fully satisfy others of the Sincerity of their Faith and Love*. For 'tis well known that full and direct Answers, to the most searching and pointed Questions are far from being sure and certain Evidences

of the *Sincerity* of a Man's *Faith and Love*. Many will and do profess and subscribe what they hesitate about, and cannot bring themselves to believe at all. And now let every one consider what Honor he does our Lord, by bringing him in as judging it the best *Expedient* to answer this End of satisfying others of the *Sincerity of Faith and Love*, that he testify the *Sincerity of his Faith* with his own Mouth. For whoever thought or found testifying out of one's Mouth, the best expedient to satisfy others of *Sincerity* in any Case? is not this often by Experience discovered to be a deceitful Measure to try it by? Is not this as easy for *Hypocrites* as Men of Integrity? And who is able to judge by this, where *Sincerity* is, and where it is wanting? Does not our Lord direct us to other Measures, when he tells us, *by their Fruits ye shall know them*, Matth. But still he confirms it by most admirable Reasoning, when he urges, that our Lord judg'd this the best *Expedient*, agreeable to what the Holy Ghost teaches Rom. x 10. and with the Mouth Confession is made unto Salvation. A rare Specimen of his great Dexterity in applying Scripture. For if he be so lucky as to meet with one Word in a Text to chime with his Design, he lays hold upon it, and without any Regard to the Scope and View of the sacred Penman, he straight applies it to his Purpose, and with great Assurance triumphs in it, as a clear and solid Proof of what he asserts. But the worst of all is yet behind, when with surprizing *Petulance* he thus prescribes and dictates to our blessed Saviour; when with so much Assurance he pronounces, that if our Blessed Lord 'had not judged this the best Expedient to answer his End, namely to qualify him for feeding his Sheep and Lambs, by satisfying them as to the Sincerity of his Faith and Love, that he testify the Sincerity

Sincerity of his Faith with his own Mouth, he otherwise had no Business to CATECHISE Peter'. What! vain Man, cou'd not the Word of God that lightneth every Man that cometh into the World, and in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, have other Views, Motives, Reasons and Designs, in making this his Business, than he cou'd dive into or be able to discover? Must the single End and the notable Expedient for answering it, which this Author has so luckily hit upon, be the only one which cou'd make it proper for our Lord to propose and repeat this Question? Did he understand our Lord's Business so well, as to enter into all the Secrets of it, and be able to point out the Springs of Action in such a Mannner as to declare, otherwise he had no Business to engage in it. There is something so shocking in this Way of treating our
Blessed

3dly, IT is Rational to INFER, That the Design of our LORD, in proposing the same Question three times, was fully to satisfy the Disciples, and other Christians, who had taken Offence at Peter, that thereby he might Qualify him for Feeding his Sheep and Lambs, which he could not do to their Edification, until they were fully satisfied, as to the Sincerity of his Faith and Love: And our LORD appears to judge it the best Expedient to answer this End, that he testify the Sincerity of his Faith with his own Mouth: Agreeable to what the Holy Ghost Teacheth, Rom. x. 10. *With the Heart Man Believeth unto Righteousness, and with the Mouth Confession, he maketh unto Salvation*; otherwise he had no business to catechise Peter, he might have given him a Certificate, and told the Disciples, without proposing these Questions to him, that Peter was as Sound in the Faith, as any among them; though he had deny'd him thrice: He was satisfied he had sincerely repented of his Sin, and seeing he had forgiven him, and received him into Communion, they ought not to scruple keeping Communion with him, and taking him as their Brother and Pastor: But in my humble Opinion, our LORD does thus deal with weak Christians, when he requires a three-fold Confession of the same Truth, whereby we are taught.

Blessed Lord, that it is scarce to be represented by all the Power of Words, and must be left to every one's own Apprehension, who have any true Concern for the *Honor* of our Lord Redeemer. But it is yet more provoking, if we observe what strange Conduct this *Writer* imputes to him, whom all the Churches know to be the Searcher of the Reins, and of the Heart, 'that he judged it the best Expedient to satisfy his Sheep and Lambs of the Sincerity of Peter's Faith and Love, by requiring him to testify the Sincerity of his Faith out of his own Mouth', as if the testifying out of his own Mouth, the Sincerity of his Faith, cou'd show the Sincerity of his Faith and Love too, when he did not mention one Word about testifying his Faith at all. And what cou'd suggest it in this Hurry of his few Thoughts to call this a catechising Peter? Was it to make it pass more current, that these Questions related to Matters of Faith? Or must every Question and Answer come under that general Name, because Catechisms are all cast into that Form? Or is it from the prevailing Apprehensions People now entertain of the common Method among us, that Catechising has something frightful and terrible in it, and is just a taking them to task, and chastising them by cramp and kittle Questions?

BUT it must not be forgot, that he confirms it by a most extraordinary Discovery, 'that if Christ did not judge it the best Expedient to satisfy his Sheep and Lambs of the Sincerity of Peter's Faith and Love, by requiring him to testify out of his own Mouth the Sincerity of his Faith, when he ask'd him, Peter loveth thou me?' he otherwise had no Business to CATECHISE his Disciple, as he did, 'for he might have given him a CERTIFICATE,' not in Writing indeed, for he adds, 'and told the Disciple'

without proposing these Questions to him, that Peter was as sound in the Faith as any among them.' It is a kind of Elegance to be admired in Authors, when they suit their Stile to the Occasion ; and it is certainly a shining Beauty in this Writer, that when he is finishing his Defence of a Presbyterian Synod, he expresses himself in a Strain familiar to them : And therefore when he is so free with the infinitely wise and unerring Head of the Church, as to prescribe a shorter and more effectual Method, for satisfying his Disciples and other Christians, of the Sincerity of Peter's Faith and Love, if he had not judged it the best Expedient to answer this End, that he testify the Sincerity of his Faith with his own Mouth, he expresses it by giving him a CERTIFICATE ; when yet in the very next Words, it amounted to no more than telling his Disciples, that Peter was sound in the Faith, and who wou'd not be charm'd with such Propriety of Language, and such close and clear Reasoning ? There is something very imitable in this way of writing, and outdoes any thing in the kind that ever has appear'd before. But still there is something odd in this Certificate, which he supposes our Lord might have given, viz. that he shou'd tell his Disciples he was satisfied Peter had sincerely repented, and seeing he had forgiven him, and received him into Communion, they ought not to scruple keeping Communion with him, and taking him as their Brother and Pastor.' For cou'd he by any Certificate have more fully declared this, than by his constant Practice, in allowing Peter as free and intimate Intercourse with him from his first rising from the Dead, as any other of the Disciples ? What need was there for his telling the Disciples what they so plainly and frequently saw ? What Ground is there to suppose they scrupled Communion with him, when he was always

always found in their Fellowship and Company whenever our Lord had appear'd unto them? If this had been otherwise, there might be some Reason for our Lord's telling *his Disciples they ought not to scruple taking him as their Brother*, but it is hard to conceive that our Lord shou'd tell *his Disciples, they ought not to scruple taking him as their Pastor*, unless we can suppose, with the Friends of *Hierarchy*, that *Peter* was the Head and Ruler of the *Apostolate*. For as there were none but *Apostles* present, so this *Certificate* is by the *Writer* himself suppos'd to be given only to the *Disciples*, and not his other offending *Christians*, and yet *Peter* by our Lord's Authority was to be taken by them as their *Brother* and *Pastor*. And yet after all, his concluding *humble Opinion* as extraordinary as any thing he has suggested in his few *Thoughts*, when he adds, *our LORD do thus deal with weak Christians, when he requires a threefold Confession of the same Truth*. What the Measure is his *THUS* refers to, is not easy to find out. Is it by asking them as he did *Peter*, if they loved him, that he required a threefold Confession of the same Truth? Or does it import that as our Lord propos'd this Question thrice to *Peter*, *lovest thou me as the best Expedient to qualify him for feeding his Sheep and Lambs*, that he might testify the Sincerity of his Faith, with his own Mouth, so to satisfy weak Christians, our Lord requires a threefold Confession of the same Truth? But then it must be shown our Lord do require in any Instance a threefold Confession of the same Truth; and he will be an obstinate Man indeed that won't submit to his dealing thus with weak Christians. But then his Authority requiring it must be very plain; If they had any such Warrant from him in my Case, why was it not produc'd and prov'd? Or must we take it for granted, that what *THE*

* First, in Communion, nor who is to give well enough sincerity.

require, HE does also require, and make it his Act and Deed? Are they his *Ambassadors and Deputies* in such an absolute and unlimited Sense? And is it in Conformity to this *Example*, that some flaming *Subscribers* have given a *threefold* Subscription to the *Confession*, in our late times of Confusion? It is very unkind, this *Author* has not received their Thanks in the most public Manner, for finding out this Precedent, to justify all the repeated Subscriptions that have been gone into.

* BUT as little as this *Story* is to his Purpose, we must not overlook these excellent *Lessons* he draws from it, to bring the matter fully home to the *Synod's Method with me*.

It were no easy matter to apprehend how we shou'd be taught, by our *Lord's asking Peter*, if he lov'd him, that 'tis no Sin to ask a sincere Gospel Minister, to give a repeated *Confession* of his Faith; If we had not learnt from this *able Interpreter* of Scripture, that making a *Profession of Love*, and giving a *Confession of Faith*, is one and the same thing. And 'tis a mighty Loss to the World surely, that the Rules of this divine *Cabala* are not set in a clear Light, by which we might understand how to make *Love* pass for *Faith* in the sacred Writings, and change the obvious Sense of them in such a manner, that we can prove out of them whatever we please, tho' in the place we adduce, there does not seem to be one Word to the purpose. But if his only Intent be in

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* First, That it is no Sin to ask a sincere Gospel Minister, (who is in Communion with God,) to give a repeated *Confession* of his Faith, nor does such a Demand, argue want of Love to the Person, who is to give an Account of his Faith, for CHRIST loved Peter well enough; nor does his repeating the *Question* infer PETER's insincerity.

this wise Instruction he suggests to his Reader, that a Demand of a repeated Confession of Faith, is as consistent with true Affection and Esteem, as a repeated Inquiry into a person's Love, which yet our Saviour did in Peter's Case, whom in the mean time according to this Author's homely Stile he loved well enough. Every one must see there is no manner of Force in this Argument, for defending the Synod's Method with me, unless I had in as gross and open a way fallen from the Faith, as Peter did from the Love of his Master. And whenever they prove that a Temptation or Fear of Men made me do so, I shall be easily satisfied that a Demand of a repeated Confession of Faith, as often as they please, will not argue want of Love. But when such a Demand was made without any just Occasion, and in Circumstances which they knew at the time, in my Apprehension made it a formal and unrighteous Inquisition, this clearly argued not only want of Love, but a manifest Design, either to make me break thro' the Conviction of my own mind, or quite overwhelm me, by the Torrent of their Authority, and raging Jealousy. And therefore tho' repeating the Question did not infer Peter's Insincerity, yet let every one judge if a Demand of a repeated Confession of Faith in these Circumstances from me, did not infer some Hopes shaking my Sincerity, and if complying with the Demand, wou'd not have inferr'd the grossest and most speaking Insincerity. So that all I need to say in Reply to his profound Instruction he offers in the second place, is to put him in Mind, that he may prove the Question put to me, was as fair a one

* 2dly, That an honest Gospel Minister, will not refuse to answer a fair Question, again and again, when his Answer may be edifying.

as that put by our Lord to *Peter*; for I must observe to him, that a *fair Question* always supposes it to be *just and seasonable*, and that the Answer to it in the present Scituation, will not involve a Man either in Guilt or Danger, which, if he thinks at all of the Subject he is writing upon, he must know was not possibly to be supposed of the *Question* propos'd to me.

BUT on his *third* I must be more particular, and shall observe in the *first* place, that he has without any Shadow of Reason taken it for granted, that these Questions were repeated to *Peter* in the *Exercise of Discipline*. And *secondly*, that if this was really the Case, his way of stating it quite overturns all the established Methods of *Discipline* among us. For by this Example it wou'd be plain, that a *scandalous* Person may be continued in the Society of the Faithful, before he make *Satisfaction* for his *offence*; for 'tis undeniable that *Peter* was dealt with in this manner, if now only at the *third* time of our Lord's appearing, he is *catechis'd* at this rate, and all along had been in the Fellowship and Communion of his *Brethren*; nay, it wou'd follow from his way of reasoning, that a *Scandal* never so great, never so public, might be satisfied for before a very

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ing to *Christians*, that may entertain Scruples against him; even though his SINCERITY will bear him out in the Eye of an Omniscient GOD.

3dly, THE Edification of Souls was dear to CHRIST, and will be so to all his faithful Servants, in the Exercise of *Discipline*; for although *Peter* might have objected, that his answering these Questions so publicly, would revive a bury'd Scandal, and render his future labours uselefs: yet our LORD thought them necessary, and that *Peter's* Character would not suffer, by his *confessing* once and again, what he knew (before he ask'd him any Question) to have been the *Sentiment* of his Soul.

FEW ; for these *Questions* were ask'd, when only *SIX* other *Disciples* were present ; and not only these, but other *Christians*, neither present nor yet converted, must be *fully satisfied* thereby ; if he but comply with this *best of Expedients*, namely, the *testifying the Sincerity of his Faith with his own Mouth* and again by the *Objection* he supposes *Peter* might have made, against *answering these Questions so publickly*, viz. by *Break of Day*, on a *retired Shore*, and before no less than *SIX* of his *Fellow-Disciples*, it must plainly appear, that the most heinous and notorious *Scandal*, may be *buried* so far, in less than *Fortnight's* time, that insisting on *Satisfaction* for it after that, wou'd be a *reviving buried Scandal* to that Degree, as to render a *Man's future Labours* useless and wou'd not this make short *Work* of the *Exercise of Discipline*, and *cramp the Power* of the *Church* beyond any *Scheme* that has been thought of yet ? Will this *mighty Man* for *Government* ever be able to make *amends* for condemning in this manner, the whole *Process* of our usual *Discipline* ? But so it is, that those who are so *unlearned and unstable*, as to *wrest the Scriptures*, for any particular Purpose, do so, often *unawares to the Destruction* of their own favourite *Schemes and Principles*. And I shall leave it to the *Reader* to judge, whether he is out of *Ignorance or Design*, he calls *Peter's repeated declaring his Love to his Master*, a *confessing once* and again, what *Christ knew* (before he ask'd him a *Question*, tho' herein he did not act as *God*) to have been the *sincere Sentiment of his Soul*. Without the turn of *Expression*, however *strain'd and impudent*, it is plain there cou'd have been no manner of *Countenance* given to the *Synod's Method* with me. And when any observe that *confessing once and again what was the sincere Sentiment of his Soul*, is the *Author's*

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is edifying

way of paraphrasing *Peter's* profession of his Love to Christ, they will at once discover how effectually this Instance justifies the *Synod's* Resentment of the ill Usage I gave them, in their requiring me to give a Confession of Faith, when they perfectly knew, I look'd upon doing it at the time, to be obeying Man rather than God; and they had the most uncontested Evidence, I had not the least Scruple to confess the particular Truth they pitched upon, on any proper, or other Occasion.

* WHAT he says we are hence taught in the next place, proceeds on the same Supposition, that our Lord's catechising *Peter* in this manner, was in the way and Exercise of Discipline; for here he represents the offended as Judges, and consequently there was on this Occasion a formal Judicature, with Judges, and the offending Party before them. And if he had been quick enough to pursue his own Thought to a proper Length, he might have observed that the great Head of the Church presided in this Tryal, and no doubt sustain'd the Character and Part of Moderator in it; and so might have shewn from this Precedent, that a Minister might be brought, *prima Instantia*, before the Supreme Judicature; and that they are proper Judges what may be edifying to any who were, or might hereafter be offended. But seeing he was not so lucky to hit off this Thought, let us consider how he has applied it in Defence of the Synod, and here we meet with some surprizing Discoveries. By the offended, he must unquestionably mean such as had taken Offence at *Peter*, and those according to him, are the Disciples and other Christians, as appears in

4thly, WE are taught hence, that the offended are Judges of what is edifying to themselves; and not the Person offending,

in his 3^d. *Observation on this Story*; and they are directly said to be Judges. Now whether he includes our LORD in this Number, or only supposes, that he acted as the Mouth of the *offended*, and spoke their Sense and Design, is not easy to determine. But he may at his Leisure consider what Reason he had to express himself in this manner, on either of these Suppositions, and if he has not spoken at Random, and in something worse than an *un-guarded* way, on such an important Subject. And if all this were quite overlook'd, what Ground is there for any such *Inference*, from the Passage he has *under his Eye*? Is there any thing in it, that looks as if the *Disciples* or other *Christians*, whom he supposed to be *offended*, had the least Share in putting these Questions, or that there was any View to their being *edified* thereby? And pray was there ever such an *unlimited Power* granted to Judges, if they happen to be the *offended*? For according to his Rule, they must be gratified in whatever they think will be *edifying* to them, and the Person *offending* has no right to judge, whether the *Demand* made by his *offended Judges*, be agreeable to the essential Rules of Equity and *Christian Discipline*.

* But let us next consider what he ventures to say in the 5th Place from this *sacred Passage*; and here by his way of thinking, there is a short
Issue

* 5^{thly}, I will venture to say from this sacred Passage, That our compassionate LORD would not impose a Pastor on his Sheep, or Lambs, to feed them; until he had fully remov'd all Suspicion of unsoundness; for altho' Peter was satisfying to him, and had sincerely repented; he would have him to give Satisfaction, to those who could not search the Hearts, and try the Reins (as he could do) in order to his being a successful Preacher of his GOSPEL among them.

Issue of all *Scandal*; for sure if this Conduct of our Lord's toward his *offending Disciple*, is to be drawn into Precedent by *Church Judicatories*, it ought to be regarded as a fix'd and invariable *Standard*; and they ought not to deviate from it in the least. And then the proper & only *Question* in every *Scandal* must be, if the *Offender loves Christ*, and if by answering directly, as *Peter* did, he *testify the Sincerity of his Faith with his own Mouth*, this must remove the *Scandal*, and all *Suspicion of Unsoundness*. And sure every *open Offender* will have an easy Method of giving *Satisfaction*; and there must be an End of all publick Rebukes and Admonitions. By our Lord's Example nothing more is to be done but propose this *Question three Times*, and as many exprefs and formal *Professions of Love to Christ*, must fully satisfy as to the *Sincerity of Faith and Love*. No matter if the *Apostle Paul* has establish'd a Canon that seems to require something more, and according to him such as *Sin before all are to be rebuked before all*. For this catechising of *Peter* is thought sufficient to set aside another Rule of the same *Apostle's*; and tho' he has enjoyn'd no *Accusation* be receiv'd against an *Elder* but before two or three *Witnesses*, yet the proposing these *Questions*, must warrant this Method of *conversing*, which is by holding an *Inquisition*. But still this *Author* will find himself at a Loss to make out, that all *Christ's Sheep and Lambs* on whom this *Apostle* was imposed as a *Pastor*, had the *Satisfaction* given them, as to know he had been catechised in this manner. For we have not the least Hint of this Matter in any other of the *Gospels*, and this one of *St. John* was not writ till near the End of *Peter's* Life. And there is no way left for this *Author* to show that *Satisfaction* was given to *Christ's Sheep and Lambs*, on whom *Peter*

was

was imposed a Pastor by his Master's proposing this Question to him, as often as he had denied Jesus, but to suppose that whenever this Apostle set himself to feed Christ's Sheep and Lambs with his heavenly Doctrine, he always introduced himself with an Account of his Lord's having catechised him, by asking him three several Times if he loved him; and this would at once qualify him for being a successful Preacher of the Gospel among them. And is it not strange, that among all the Acts of his Life, there shou'd be no manner of notice taken of what only cou'd qualify him to feed Christ's Sheep and Lambs? tho' we read particularly of his being very successful in preaching the Gospel.

* AND NOW at last we are come to his concluding Inference, and here it will be sufficient to converse with him in his own Method of holding an Inquisition, as he delights to call all manner of asking Questions, but still I shall offer these in the most submissive way. Pray then, where does he find these tender Consciences, or what Ground has he to suppose that in their Hearts they scrupled the Sincerity of Peter's Love? And again, how does it appear, that our Lord's knowing this, was the Reason of asking the Question thrice, or that he did it for their Satisfaction? And unless he can give full and satisfying Answers to this catechising, his Inference has not the least

Found

* 6thly, seeing our Blessed LORD does not find Fault with these tender Consciences, who are suppos'd in their Hearts to scruple the Sincerity of Peter's Love; which our LORD knowing, therefore asks the Question thrice for their Satisfaction, may we not infer, that in our imperfect State we will, and may scruple communion with Persons, who may be dear to, and in communion with God? And yet in our present View of the Terms which the Gospel hath set, for our Communion on Earth we cannot comfortably communicate with them.

Foundation. And the Point is still to be clear'd, not indeed what in *this imperfect State we will*, but *may scruple*, or if such a *View of the Terms*, which the Gospel hath set for our Communion on Earth, be reasonable and just, that for mere scruples about another's Sincerity, we cannot comfortably communicate with him, tho' for ought we know, he may be dear to, and in communion with God. Wou'd not this make the Church a Scene of endless Confusion, and place the Christian's Comfort not only on a narrow, but a floating Bottom? If every Scruple about the Sincerity of a fellow Christian, will justify our scrupling Communion with him, or rob us of our Comfort, if we don't absolutely refuse it.

* BUT however the Reader's Patience may be severely tried by wand'ring so closely after this

* THUS I have laid open the SYNOD's conduct towards Mr. Nevin, and given a short Account of that Affair, which Mr. H. apprehends, has so impaired our Reputation, that we will never be able to answer for our selves, and I submit this short Vindication of the SYNOD, to the Judgement of the impartial.

I could have notic'd many unfair Things in Mr. Nevin's printed Defence, such as a Catalogue he gives of the SYNOD, wherein he has set down several Ministers as voting for him, who voted against him; and he has brought in all that were absent from the Synod as his Friends: And in his way of stating the Matter, he would have the World to believe, that he was excluded contrary the Mind of the greatest Number of the Ministers: But the Gentleman had an Opportunity of seeing another SYNOD since, and had that Inimination been true, he had a fair Occasion given him, of calling his Sentence over again, when the SYNOD was very full, as it was last Year. I shall say no more on this Subject, because of a personal Love I bear to the Gentleman; tho' I cannot but dislike the Conversation he had at Mr. Hannington's, his Letter to Mr. Smith, and Conduct at the SYNOD, which expos'd him to their just Censure, in which I concurr'd, and have not yet found Reason to alter my Judgement, being determin'd to act as I did, from the Reasons I have offered in Defence of the Synod.

Author in all his *rambling* Fits, his way of winding up this Affair gives such a *Sample* of his bold asserting Facts at Random, without any Regard to Truth or Evidence, that there is a plain Necessity following him to his utmost Length. I am content to allow he could have noticed many unfair things in my printed Tryal, if they are all such as the Particular he condescends upon. On whom the unfair thing that case is to be charg'd, if I have set down Ministers as voting for who voted against me, and have brought in all that were absent from the Synod as my Friends, every one will be able Judge, when he serves the Title of that Catalogue of Ministers he refers to, which runs in these Words, *A List of the Ministers who did not joyn in the Vote of Exclusion*, and will be at the pains to consider the cautionary mark, which is immediately subjoyned to that List, p. 236, and in these Words. 'Of the above List some had not been present in a Session of the Synod, some had been present in every Session, some the last wherein I was excluded, some in fewer, some present at the very last Session and were silent not answering their Names when they were call'd; some were present when the excluding Motion against me was made, and left the House before it was voted. How many or how few of those, who were absent, would have voted for denying me Ministerial Communion, had they been present, I will not take upon me to determine;

This is such a surprizing Instance of his rash and heedless way of representing the plainest matters, that I need be at no pains to give any other Warning, how little Stress is to be laid on his general Charge, of having it in his Power to notice many such unfair things, tho' he has prepared his Reader to give an easy, implicit Assent to it, by a strong Profession of personal Love. But after so severe a home a Thrust at my Veracity and Candor, I can regard it no otherwise, than as a counter part of *Joab's* Behaviour to *Abner*, who spoke peaceably to him in the Gate, and smote him under the fifth Rib. I do put him to his Defiance to show any unfair thing, or that might justly be called so, by a Person of the least Candor and Ingenuity. I am far from pretending, there are no Overights or Escapes in that Performance. This is a Degree of Sufficiency I perfectly give to these able Men who wou'd have all their Decisions obeyed, and the Strength of their Authority. But any wilful Misrepresentation of Facts, I utterly disclaim, and perhaps may be so bold as to challenge him or any other to produce the least Mistake, that tends to make my Cause one whit the better; for if any Mistake shou'd be found upon, and it at the same time appears, that it would equally have served my purpose to have told the Truth exactly as it was, that it would be in Reason no great cause of Triumph. And this is the very thing with respect to all that this kind Author can in reality make out as an unfair thing to charge upon me. That in the List I gave of Ministers who did not joyn in the Vote of Exclusion, I may have

would one or two who voted against me. But can it be supposed that this was done *unfairly*, or with Design either to blacken the Party that was so violent against me, or to byass the Reader to give partial Judgment in my Favour? Does it alter or any way affect the true State of the case, if one or two more gave Sentence against me, than I have set down in the *List*? It either the *Person* or *Persons*, whom they may have injured in this manner, think it their Honor to be known to the World, as concurring in that *righteous Judgment*; or if this Author or any of the *Party* imagine the *Name* or *Names* which I have thus misplaced, will give *Weight* or *Credit* to their *Cause*, I charge myself upon any *satisfying Evidence*, to acknowledge and correct my *Mistake*, in a *Postscript* I may shortly publish, against that part of the *Appendix*, wherein the *Proceedings of the Synod* in my case are further supported and defended. And then every one shall see how empty and groundless the Boasting of this *Author* is, as if he had set down several Ministers as voting for me, who voted against me.

ONE thing I must take notice of myself, which I presume this Author will not be ready to charge on me as an *unfair thing*; that I may do Justice to the Character of one who is set down in the *List* of Ministers who voted for not allowing me ministerial Communion, but I left the Synod some time before the *Vote* was put, viz. the Rev'd. James Coghran of Letterkenny Presbytery. I know not but he might have been abused in the same manner, as the two Mr. Craffords were, at the calling of whose Names in the Roll, some in that Assembly voted for the Negative of the Question against me, tho' they were in Dungannon, when the Vote of Exclusion pass'd. But it was so long before I knew of Mr. Coghran's being absent, that I cou'd not have positive Evidence of his Name's being answer'd to at the calling of the Roll, as I did in the Case of the other Gentlemen already mentioned; and therefore must be content to let it pass for a *Mistake*, and leave this *Author* to make what Advantage he pleases of it.

BUT tho' I may have fully satisfied the Judgement of the impartial, that it is only a Rant of his *Enthusiastic Zeal*, that in the Way of stating the Matter, I wou'd have the World believe, that I was excluded contrary the Mind of the greatest Number of the Ministers. I think it worth while to lay before the World, the Reasons, which hinder'd me from embracing that Opportunity he says I had of calling my Sentence over again. 1st I heard from the Mouth of very credible Witnesses, that the profound Mr. [Name] in his elaborate Sermon at opening of that Synod had advanced Principles, which were enough to dash all my Hope of this Piece; when without any Resentment from his Orthodox Brethren, he maintain'd that God never reverses the Sentence of his up-
right Servants; much less cou'd I expect that their fellow Servants wou'd. Of which I had a very convincing Proof a few Hours after I had inculcated such excellent Doctrine, when they wou'd not allow

allow me to be present as an *Auditor* in one of their *private Meetings*, when an *Affair* wherein I was *equally* concerned with them was under *Deliberation*. But on the *single Motion* of that *eminent* *Divine*, I was desired by the *Moderator* to *withdraw* from an *Assembly*, wherein by their own *Constitution* they cou'd claim no *Auditory*, as *unworthy* to be in their *Assembly*, because I had *exposed* the *Synod* by *publishing* their *Proceedings* against me. 2dly I cou'd not be sure it wou'd stand me in any *stead*, if it was *true*, that I was *excluded* *contrary* the *Mind* of the *greatest Number* of *Ministers*; for they might either be *silent*, *withdraw*, or be *out-voted* by the *Minority* of *Ministers*, and the *forlorn Hope* of the *Party*, this *Author's* *judicious Elders*. Which I had a *rare Instance* of, in that very *Synod* when it was carried *contrary* to the *mind* of the *greatest Number* of the *Ministers*, to *suspend* a *Minister* that was not *subject* to them, nor had ever *appeared* or been *Cited* to *appear* in *Judgement* before them for the *Cause* they tried and *condemned* him. *Lastly*, I cou'd not propose *Peace* or *Comfort* among them. For not only *Partisanship* so high, that whoever wou'd not tamely submit to the *leading Faction*, must expect nothing but their *keenest Resentment*, upon the least *Pretence* whatsoever. But *Principles* were openly asserted, to support the *Synod's* extraordinary *Sentence* against me, that made that *venerable Assembly* *Lords* of *Men's* *Faith* and *Practices* too. For it was *strenuously* maintain'd that the *Sentence* of their *supreme Judicature* was to be *obey'd* by all *subordinate* ones, be it *RIGHT* or *WRONG*; that all the *Qualifications* the *Gospel* requires in a *minister*, were not *sufficient* to preserve a *Person's* *Right* to *minister* *Communion*, but other *additional Qualifications* *prescrib'd* by *ecclesiastical Assemblies* were *necessary*, and the *Want* of these enough to *exclude* one *qualified* by the *Laws* of the *Gospel*; And that tho' a *Sentence* pass'd against a *man* were in itself *unjust*, yet his *appealing* to the *Word* in his own *Defence*, was *Reason* good enough not to *reverse* that *righteous Decree*. What *Peace* cou'd be hoped for, among a *Society* of *Men*, under the *Influence* of such *unsound* and *tyrannical Principles*, the *Event* has afterwards shown, when they *spirited* up the *same Party* that carried on such a *Scene* of *Injustice* and *Violence* against me, to *exclude* from their *Body* an *entire Presbytery*, by far the *most blameless*, *judicious*, and *learned* of their *Number*, upon a *gross Mistake* and *Blunder* of their own, which they wou'd neither rectify in their *Minutes*, nor be *convinced* of, tho' it was again and again made as *clear* as the *Sun* at *noon Day*; as may be *evidently* seen in the *Narrative* of the *Presbytery* of *Antrim*, p. 231. and so their *rash* and *violent Proceedings* they fully confirmed the *Truth* and *Justness* of *Nazianzen's* *Complaint*, and *Observation* of *Councils* in his *Days*, ' he never saw a good and happy End of any Contention ' but that they rather increase than lessen the Evil, that the Love of ' Contention and Ambition always overcomes their Reason.' *Amos* 5: 13.

surely this might abundantly justify any to imitate his *Resolution* with respect to *Ecclesiastical Assemblies* which claim, or assert to themselves a proper *Authority*, when his Reason will be found so fully verified of them. 'Of never going to any Council, because nothing is to be heard there, but Geese and Cranes, who fight without Understanding one another. There one may see Divisions, Quarrels and shameful Things, which were hid before, and are collected into one Place with Cruel Men,' I am far from applying this to the whole *Subscribers*, for I know there are many sensible and well disposed Men among them, who are sick of their *Assemblies*, while they are entirely over-ruled by a violent *Party*: But I may appeal to all impartial Men, of whatever Denomination, who have been *Witnesses* of their late *Proceedings*, If I may not apply to them the beautiful Comparison of the *Psalmist*, without pronouncing it either as a *Prophecy* or *Imprecation*, 'That they are as Grass on the House Tops which withereth, before it groweth up; wherewith the Mower filleth not his Hand, nor he that bindeth Sheaves, his Bosom. Neither do they which do go by, say, the Blessing of the Lord be upon you, we bless you in the Name of the Lord.'

CONCLUSION to the Reader.

AN Address of this kind may seem extraordinary; but if the Ceremony of making the proper Complements to the Reader in the first place be overlook'd, it must be own'd he is most fairly dealt by in this manner. No Art made use of to sooth him into any partial Allowances, nor his Judgment desired, till he has had full Opportunity to examine and consider the matter in Debate. And even then, no greater favour ask'd, than to admit of an apology for the trouble that is given him so late. For, however the Men of every size among the *Dissenters* had shewn 'emselv's highly delighted with *Marvel's* Wit, and *Alsop's* Humor and Pleasantry, when employ'd in their Defence; it was not to be expected they wou'd give any *Quarters* to one, who wou'd seek to turn the same Weapons against themselves. And therefore it seem'd too hazardous a thing to venture abroad such a humorous Performance, and all the use it was ever like to be put to, was to divert a few Friends, and indulge a little Merriment and Laughter. And while the Author met with no Disturbance from this Defence of the Synod's Method with him, nor the private Efforts of the Party, this Piece might have remain'd in that State of Privacy and Retirement. But when some *Partisans* of the Faction found Means to make an open Attempt to rent his People from him, and this Defence of the Synod was trump'd up, as a full Justification of all the Proceedings against him. It was no longer thought expedient to let it pass, without the proper Reply it richly deserved, and whether

then it has met with that or no, the Reader is now a Judge; and it is further humbly submitted to him, if the late Measures taken against him don't fully justify all the Liberty he has taken with the Faction and their able Champion, The short Account whereof, is as follows.

A single Member of the *Author's* Congregation, who for some time had attended the public Services of a neighbouring Minister, without any Commission, or consulting any more of the People than two or three, repaired to the *very Rev'd. Presbytery of Bangor*, with a View to be satisfied about the true Grounds and Reasons of his *Minister's being denied Ministerial Communion*, and to find out, if there was any thing in his Case, that cou'd make it dangerous for People to continue under his Ministry; and for that End resolv'd to propose to have one of their Number sent to open up and unfold the lurking Danger in the Face of the People, or if no such thing appear'd, that every one then might see all the Noise and Jealousy, that was kept up by private Whispers, or more open Calumnies, was but empty and groundless. But this Member fell into Hands, who put him upon quite other Measures, and immediately vamp'd up a Supplication, setting forth that many were uneasy under the *Author's* pastoral Care, and desiring that Means might be taken for supplying such with a Minister of sound and true Presbyterian Principles; and to which he was prevail'd upon to set the Names of TEN other Persons, most of whom highly resented this Usage of them. Upon the Strength of this powerful Invitation, a Majority of the Presbytery then present, contrary to the Advice and Judgment of some of their most understanding Brethren, agreed to send the *Rev'd. Mr. Henry Hamilton*, to try out the Inclinations of the People; and that he might have full Opportunity to do so, appointed him to go to the Spot on Tuesday, Nov'r. 21, 1727. and preach there, or not, as he found it convenient. This was at once nois'd not only in the Congregation, but throughout the Neighbourhood; and it was given out, that on the Day after his Arrival, there wou'd be Sermon in the place; and as the *Author* was desired by the Suppliant himself to attend for his own Vindication, this engaged a vast Multitude of all Sorts, to think of coming thither. But to their great Surprise, they met a Countermand that Morning, tho' Mr. Hamilton was actually come; and he in a short Speech told the People that ventur'd the Length, he had no Instructions to preach till the Sunday following, and if they would then attend, he wou'd preach, and open up his Commission and Errand. Just as he had thus dismiss'd the Assembly, the *Author* appear'd, waited on the *Rev'd Missionary*, and express'd his Concern at the Disappointment, alledging it had been the fairest way, to have managed the Affair in his Presence, when he might have Opportunity to make his Defence to any thing that might be said against him. To which the good old Man frankly replied, his only Business there was to preach Christ, and that he nor none of them had any thing else to say against the *Author*, but that he was no Member of their Jurisdiction.

dicatures. And this occasioning some Discourse about the *Synod's* Conduct, and the extraordinary Sentence they pass'd against the *Author*, the *celebrated Performance* which has been consider'd in the foregoing Papers, was mention'd as *fully* vindicating the Proceedings of that *venerable Assembly*; and when the Book was produc'd, and openly charg'd with *Heresy and Nonsense*, the *Rev'd. Father* first ask'd with Surprize when he heard the Words, *if they were really contain'd in that Book?* And when he was desired to read them with his own Eyes, he contented himself with saying that *Mr. M— was a brave man, and he would defend what he had said*; and the *Author* then assur'd him, he shou'd have a full Opportunity to do so.

AND thus the *Author* suppos'd his Work was over for that Time; but the whole Multitude being vext at their Disappointment, did so vehemently urge his preaching to them; that all Denials were vain. In the mean Time *Mr. Hamilton* went off the Ground, but return'd the *Friday* following, to prepare Matters for the Design in View; and then delivered to the first named *Member* a proper *Supplication* to be signed by such, as were desirous to quit the *Author's* Ministry, and to be form'd into a *separate Society*. This *Supplication* he ordered the *Member* to copy out in his own Hand, and refused to leave the Original with him. On the *Sunday* following, *Mr. Hamilton* preached to a numerous Assembly in his serious familiar Way, and after Sermon pull'd out the *Supplication*, and ordered the forementioned *Member* to read it publicly, *desiring him not to be ashamed of it, for there was no harm in it.* But when none cou'd be got to subscribe it, but the person who read it, there was Intimation given, that the *Paper* shou'd be left in his Hands, that any who had a mind to do it afterwards, might find it with him: But no others cou'd be drawn into the Snare; and this very *Member* himself reflecting how far short this *Attempt* came of his first Expectation, and upon Enquiry finding how groundless the several *Charges* brought against the *Author* were, has since attended his public Ministrations.

IT will no doubt surprize the *Reader*, when he understands the *Supplication* was stuff'd with the grossest Lies and Calumnies against the *Author*, notwithstanding what this *Rev'd Gentleman* had assur'd him of, in the hearing of many Witnesses. There has been Application made to the *Rev'd Presbytery*, to know if this was done by their Direction: Or if they wou'd undertake to make good the several *Charges* brought there against the *Author*; and *Mr. Hamilton* has been expostulated with by Letter, on his Conduct, and Reparation required in the Gospel Way for the Injury done to one, whom he honoured with the Character of Brother; but no Satisfaction cou'd be had. And therefore the *Author* takes this Opportunity to propose the only effectual Way to silence and confute

